1432

A TREATISE OF EFFECTVALL CALLING AND ELECTION.

In XVI. SERMONS. On 2 *Peter* 1.10.

WHEREIN

A Christian may discern whether yet he be effectually *Called* and *Elected*, And what course he ought to take that he may attain the Assurance thereof.

Preached by that faithful Servant of CHRIST,

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A TREATISE OF CALLING AND ELECTION

To the Reader.

Good Reader,

IT's a true saying, that the assurance of an eternal life is the life of this temporal life: The Apostle tells us, that if in this life onely we had hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable; None being exposed to so many troubles and tribulations in this life as the best Christian. And what could sustain and bear us up under them all, but the certaine hope and expectation of a better Resurrection? This makes Christians glory in tribulation, despise all the glory of the world, run as swiftly in waies of duty, as the chariots of Aminadab; in a word, to enjoy a Heaven upon earth. They therefore are the greatest enemies of a Christians comfort, that teach a doctrine of doubting; that a Christian must alwaies hang in suspense about his eternal state; and can never arrive to any certainty, whether he shall be saved or no.

But as this assurance is excellent, so it is hard to come by; Difficilia quæ pulchra. 'Tis not to be obtained without a great deal of labour and diligence. 'Tis usually the fruit of much prayer, and care, and humiliation, and long-waiting; those that come by it so easily, and get it so soon, have great cause to suspect that their assurance is not of the right kinde: Carnal security and presumption is easily attained; but Christian assurance not without great difficulty.

'Tis therefore much to be lamented, that there is so little diligence used for obtaining the assurance of our effectual Calling and eternal Election, which is of such great con-

cernment to every Christian. What care do men take, and what diligence do they give to make sure their lands, and goods, and worldly estates? They cannot be at rest till they have secured these. But upon what uncertainties do they venture the salvation of their precious and immortal souls? They run the most desperate hazard of their eternal salvation; never consider whether they are in the way to heaven or hell, until they drop irrecoverably into the bottomless pit. Oh what a strange madness possesseth the mindes of men, that they should look no more to their own safety; that they think it wisdome to secure every thing except their own souls. What evil have they deserved of you, that you should neglect them so much?

The designe of this Treatise is to awaken men from their security, and to stirre them up to give all diligence to make their Calling and Election sure. It was handled by the Author as a just Corollary from the Doctrine of the Glory of Heaven, and the Torments of Hell, (which Treatise is already published) as appears in the Introduction to this discourse; That seeing there is such glory prepared for the Elect, and such torments for the reprobate, it concerns every Christian to give all diligence to make sure to himself, that he shall attain the one, and escape the other; So that these three Treatises have dependence upon each other, and together make up one complete Systeme. In this last thou shalt finde many practical cases handled, of great soul-concernment, both for the comfort of such as are sincere, and the discovery of those that are unsound. If thou shalt reap any profit by the perusal hereof, let God have the praise, and let them have thy prayers, who are

Ready to spend and be spent for the good of thy soul.

Edmund Calamy. Simon Ashe.
Jeremiah Whitaker. William Taylor.
Allen Geere.

OF THE ASSURANCE OF OUR Vocation and Election.

SERMON I.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

TO give you an account why I pitch't upon theſe words, it is briefly thus: Having ſpent ſeventeen Sermons in treating of the glory of Heaven for the Elect, and of the torments of Hell for the Reprobate; I deemed it moſt meet to ſhut up thoſe two Doctrines in the proſecution of this Subject, of the *Aſſurance of our Election and Vocation*, that ſo if this Doctrine be well improved, you may have eſtabliſhment in your own hearts, that you are freed from the torments of the damned, and may be confident you ſhall be ſtated into the Glory of Heaven, which God hath provided for all his Saints. And to the end you might have aſſurance, that you ſhall be freed from the one, and ſhall enjoy the other; you muſt make it your work according to the words of my Text, *to make your calling and election ſure*: Make but that ſure, and you are ſure of heaven. This is the reaſon why I pitchd upon this ſubject: And it is my care in preaching the Word, not to chuſe thoſe Texts that are moſt for my eaſe in ſtudy, but for your profit in hearing; that ſo one Subject might back another, and one Subject might ſtrengthen another, and being put together, might more ſerve for your edification and knowledge.

I ſhall not ſtand long in prefacing: All that I have to do in the managing of thoſe words, are theſe three things.

1. To ſhew you the ſcope and dependance of the words.
2. The ſenſe and meaning.
3. To draw out thoſe practical obſervations with naturally flow from them: and then apply the obſervations deduced.

For the ſcope and dependance of theſe words: you may diſcern it lyes thus; *Peter* who is called an Apoſtle of the Circumciſion, that is, an Apoſtle whoſe work and office it was to Preach to the circumciſed Jews (as it was *Pauls* office to Preach to the uncircumciſed Gentiles) he writ his Epiſtle to the diſperſed Jews that were ſcattered throughout the world, through *Pontus, Aſia, Cappadocia, Galatia,* and *Bythinia:* whence obſerve, *Gods people are a ſcattered people.* And to them he writes that though they were perſons living in different places, yet they had the ſame faith: *Simon Peter a ſervant and an Apoſtle of Ieſus Chriſt, to them that have obtained like precious faith.* So that you ſee the ſpirit of God, where it works in men, though they live in different places, yet they ſhall all believe the ſame Truth, and all receive the ſame faith: Though different in language, yet but one God, and one Faith. The ſpirit of God wrought the ſame Faith among thoſe ſcattered Chriſtians; and the Apoſtle writing to theſe Jews, he begins his Epiſtle 1. By way of ſalutation. *ver.* 2. *Grace and peace be multiplyed to you.* 2. He writes by way of conſolation, *ver.* 4. telling them that they are *Partakers of the Divine Nature,* that they are *called to Glory,* and ſhall enjoy all the promiſes of the Goſpel: Theſe are the great props with which he bears up their hears and comforts them by. Then 3. He proceeds by way of exhortation and direction, *ver.* 5. and that is, that they ſhould *give diligence to adde grace to grace,* that they ſhould make it their τὸ ἔργον or their main buſineſs for which they are ſent into the world, not onely to get grace, but to thrive in grace; and begins with Faith, becauſe this is the foundation or mother-grace: and this he preſſeth by a double Argument. Firſt, conſidering the benefit ſhall redound to them, in caſe they perform this duty to labour to thrive in grace, *ver.* 8. *If theſe things be*

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in you and abound; they ſhall make you that you ſhall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Ieſus. If you make it your work to grow in grace, you ſhall never be a barren or unfruitful people; but you ſhall be growing in grace, and thriving in God ſtill. 2. From the inconvenience that would accrue, in caſe they ſhould neglect this work, *ver. 9. He that lacks theſe things, is blind and cannot ſee afar off*; that is, he that lacks theſe graces: if you do not grow in grace, you will be ſo dim ſighted, you will ſo deaden your comforts, and darken your evidences, that you can have no aſſurance you ſhall be ſaved. And then he comes in with a general exhortation backing all this, that ſeeing there is this good comes by adding grace to grace, and ſeeing there will be this evil if you do it not; he brings all home by a practical inference, in the words of my Text, *Wherefore Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.*

The words are not difficult, though indeed they are mangled by the Papiſts, who bring this Text to Martyrdome by their corrupt gloſſes. I ſhall onely give you a briefe Paraphraſtical Explication, and ſo come to the Obſervations.

Wherefore] That you may ſee the force of the connexion, it is as much as if the Apoſtle ſhould ſay thus: Seeing there comes ſo great good by growing in grace, and ſeeing the neglect of it doth ſo much hurt; not onely to deaden your hearts, but darken your comforts, that you can have no cleare and comfortable evidence for heaven; Therefore *give diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.*

Wherefore the rather brethren:] that is, Brethren, not in the fleſh, but in the faith of Chriſt, imbracing the ſame faith, keeping to the ſame head; them the Apoſtle calls brethren.

Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence:] The word in the Greek is more emphatical, and ſignifies to do a thing enough, not *agere*, but *ſatagere*, not in an overly, and careleſs way, but to do a thing with induſtry, vigilancy, and unweariedneſs of ſpirit: it ſhould not be matter of conſtraint, but free and voluntary: *Give diligence.* And the diligence you ſhould uſe is in matters of the ſoul. *Give diligence:* In what? *To make your Calling and Election ſure.* Firſt, I muſt ſhew you

Διὸ μᾶλλον, ἀδελφοὶ σπουδάσατε.

what is meant by *Calling*; then by *Election*: and then shew you why Calling is set before Election, when in order of time Election is before Calling.

1. What is meant by *Calling*; which, that you may understand; you must know there is a twofold Calling: an external, and an internal Calling.

The external Calling is that general invitation, which by the Preaching of the Gospel is made unto men, to invite them to come in to Jesus Christ: and most in the world are called by this call, both good and bad.

2. The internal Calling, when the spirit of God accompanies the outward administration of the word, to call a man from ignorance to knowledge, and from a state of nature to a state of grace; and of this Calling my Text means. *Make your Calling sure*; that is, you that live under the Preaching of the Gospel, be sure you be called thereby.

Your Calling and Election.] Election is an act of God, whereby from all eternity he doth purpose within himself, of his own pleasure and will to bring a certain number of men unto salvation by Jesus Christ.

But now, how can it be said, We must make our calling and election sure? Doth not *the Foundation of God stand sure*, as the Apostle saith? And are not *the gifts and calling of God without repentance*? How then must we make our Election sure, when all the Decrees of God stand sure?

Answ. Beloved, when it is said you must make these sure, you must take it in this sense; not to make them sure on Gods part, for it cannot be made more sure then it is already; whom he hath elected, shall be glorified: But make it sure on your parts; that is, Labour to have a real, bottom'd, and grounded assurance that you are effectually called, that you are elected by God in his eternal decree, to obtain life and glory by Jesus Christ.

Certitudo Objecti, & certitudo Subjecti. Divines therefore give this distinction; That there is an assurance of the *Object*, and that is sure enough; for if God hath decreed you to glory, that will hold sure for ever. But then; there is a certitude of the *Subject*, an assurance to the person that is elected; and that is, when by a reflex act of faith you have a grounded perswasion in your own breasts, that you are

effectually

effectually called, and eternally elected: an aſſurance in your own apprehenſion and knowledge.

Laſtly, Why is *Calling* here ſet before *Election* when in order of time *Election* is before *Calling*? You are called in time by the Preaching of the Goſpel, you are elected before all time, before the world: *Before the foundation of the world was laid he hath elected us in Chriſt*, Eph. 1. 4. And if ſo, what is the reaſon that Calling in my Text is put before election?

Anſw. To this I anſwer, Calling in order of words is placed before Election, not as if it were in time before it; but to ſhew that we can never be ſure of our Election till God hath effectually called us by the Preaching of the Goſpel: and therefore *Calling* is ſet before *Election*.

Thus I have opened the things moſt material, giving you the ſenſe of the words. The whole Verſe is made up of two parts.

Firſt, Here is a main duty enjoyned, in theſe words, *Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure.*

Secondly, Here is a ſtrong inducement to inforce you to this duty; and that in the laſt words, *If you do theſe things you ſhall never fall.*

In the duty enjoyned there are ſeveral things obſervable:

1. The matter of the duty: *To make ſure your election and calling.*

2. The manner how you muſt ſet about this duty; and that is with diligence: *Give diligence.*

3. The motive to draw you to it, in the word *Wherefore.*

4. Here is a compariſon between this duty and all other duties; *Wherefore the rather*: do this rather then all other things in the world. And,

Laſtly, Here is that loving compellation whereby *Peter* would gain them to ſet upon the ready practiſe of this duty, in that word, *Brethren, Wherefore Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election ſure.*

From theſe five Parts there are five points obſervable.

As 1. From the matter of the duty, *Make ſure your election and vocation.* Hence note;

1. *That it is the main and chiefe duty of a Chriſtian in this life,* *Doct. 1.*

to

to make this sure to his soul, that he is effectually called and eternally elected.

2. From the Manner how you must do this duty; willingly, or diligently. Note hence,

Doct. 2. 2. *That Christians ought to set about this duty of making sure their effectual calling, and eternal election, with a great deal of diligence.*

3. From the motive to this duty; *Wherefore Brethren.* Wherefore? why, considering the evil that comes by slothfulness, and by neglect of improving grace, therefore *give diligence.* The observation hence is,

Doct. 3. 3. *That seeing much hurt comes by slothfulness in not improving grace, this should strongly oblige Christians to be the more diligent in all matters of Religion.*

4. From the comparison of this duty with others: *Wherefore, the rather brethren*; *i. e.* rather then do any thing do this, to make your calling and election sure: Hence Note;

Doct. 4. 4. *That of all imployments in the world, you should rather imploy your selves with diligence in making sure of heaven:* To make sure that you are effectualy called, and eternally elected.

Lastly, From the Compellation of *Peter*; *Wherefore, Brethren.* Note,

Doct. 5. 5. *That when we would fasten exhortation upon others to duty, we should labour to express to them abundance of affection.* Here *Peter* when he would urge the Jews to a duty, insinuates into them by a loving expression, calling them Brethren; *Wherefore Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.*

But I should both confound your memory, and cross my usual Method, should I speak of these five Doctrines thus drawn forth; I had rather then thus mangle the Text, give you the scope and substance thereof in fewer Doctrines. You may be pleased therefore in dividing the words, to draw them into two parts.

1. A duty generally pressed, and that in these words, *Give diligene.*

2. The particulars wherein our diligence must be conversant, expressed; And that in two things. First, *In making your calling sure.* Secondly, *In making your election sure.*

From

From the words thus divided, will arise two Points of Doctrine.

First, From the duty pressed, *Give diligence*, Note,

I. *That in all matters of soul-concernment Christians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence.* Doct. 1.

Secondly, From the particulars wherein this duty of diligence is to be conversant, that is, in making your Calling and Election sure. Hence observe,

II. *That the great diligence of a Christian ought chiefly to be imployed about this, to make sure to his soul, that he is effectually called, and eternally elected.* Doct. 2. These are the two points I shall draw from these words.

I begin with the first, *That in all matters of soul-concernment, Christians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence.* In the fifth verse it is said likewise, *Give all diligence*: as if all your chiefe endeavours should be about the concernments of your soul.

In the managing of this point, I shall lay down the demonstrations of it; then the reasons; then apply it.

First, For the demonstration of it: It appears that in all soul-concernments you should put forth a great deal of diligence, by those resemblances that the work belonging to the salvation of the soul is compared to in Scripture. As

1. Sometimes the work of Christianity in saving the soul is compared to a race, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that is set before us.* So 1. *Cor.* 9, 24, 25. When you walk in your Gardens or Galleries, you take no pains; but when you run a race, you labour and strive hard, and put forth all your strength to attain the end. Why (Beloved) matters about the soul, they are compared to running of a race; to shew, what labours and endeavours you must put forth in all imployments of the soul.

2. It is compared to wrestling, *Eph.* 6. 12. *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities and Powers.* And so 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. An allusion to the *Olympick* games, and publick pastimes, when men wrestled before the common multitude, wherein they put forth all their strength and skill to throw each other down; To note, that Christianity is no slight work, but a wrestling work, wherein a great deal of diligence and labour is to be put forth.

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3. It is expressed in Scripture by fighting a Battel; 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. *We have fought a good fight.* And, *As good Souldiers you have endured hardness,* 2. *Tim.* 2. 3. Now when men are fighting for their lives, what care, and what labour. and what diligence do they put forth to save themselves? And the work of Christianity in the concernments of the soul is set forth by this resemblance.

4. It is compared to one being in an Agony; *Luke.* 13. 24. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate*; The word in the Greek is ἀγωνίζεσθε, *Strive*, till you are in an Agony, as Christ was: Christ was in an agony in the Garden, when he sweat drops of blood; so saith *Luke*, Strive, and strive till you are in an agony, that you sweat blood again in the work of your souls. Now put these together, that the work of Christianity is resembled to a Race, to a Fight, to be in an Agony, to Wrestling, wherein men put forth the utmost of their strength; the resemblance will hold forth this, That you must put forth a great deal of diligence in all matters of soul-concernment.

Now for the reasons why you must be thus diligent in the matters of Christianity. I shall lay down ten.

Reas. 1. 1. Because diligence is required in all matters concerning the body, therefore much more should you put forth diligence in all matters concerning the soul. Diligence is required in all matters concerning the body, *Eccles.* 9. 10. *Whatever thou putteſt thy hand unto, do it with all thy might.* And we read (*Psa.* 127.) of men that *rise up early, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness*, and all for the body, to sustain that. Now if you must put forth so much diligence, and use so much care to thrive in the Body, then much more for the soul: The soul is a more noble piece then the body; and if you must work in your calling, you must much more work out your salvation: If you must labour for earth, you must much more labour for heaven: if you labour to lay up treasure here, you should much more labour to lay up treasure for hereafter. If you work, and toil, and all to find subsistence for a mortal and vile body, you should much more use diligence and take pains for a glorious immortal soul.

Reas. 2. Because many have miscarried to all eternity, for the want of

of putting forth diligence in the matters of ſalvation, *Heb.* 12. 15. *Looking diligently, leſt any fall from the grace of God:* many men did fail of Gods grace, becauſe they did not look after grace diligently: Why alas, beloved, how many loſe grace, and loſe Chriſt for want of diligence? the five fooliſh Virgins loſt Chriſt for want of diligence, *Mat.* 25. *Lu.* 13. 14. Many have loſt heaven by uſing ſlight endeavours after heaven; *Strive* (ſaith Chriſt) *to enter in at the ſtrait gate, for many ſhall ſeek to enter in and ſhall not be able*: Their want of diligence, becauſe they onely ſought, and did not ſtrive in the wayes of heaven, therefore they fell ſhort and miſſed it.

3 Becauſe all you can do for your ſouls is little enough for to ſave them. I may make uſe of that expreſſion, 2 *Pet.* 4. 17. *The righteous ſhall ſcarcely be ſaved*: (though I know it may have reference in ſome ſenſe to outward ſalvation onely) yet I may make uſe of it to this purpoſe, *that if the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and ſinner appear?* all the diligence and endeavours you can put forth is little enough, and too too little to ſave your ſouls: *Eph.* 6. 13. *Put on the whole Armour of God that you may be able to ſtand in the evil day, and when you have done all, ſtand.* A ſtrange expreſſion! as much as if the Apoſtle ſhould ſay, All you can do is little enough to ſtand: When you have done all to ſtand, you can hardly ſtand, and when you have done all to get grace, you can hardly get grace. And therefore when all the diligence you can put forth in the wayes of God, is little enough to ſave the ſoul; and all little enough to keep on a good profeſſion in the wayes of grace; when you have done all you can, ſtand: *Pro.* 4. 24. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, &c.* *Reaſ.* 3.

4. You ſhould put forth diligence in al matters of ſoul-concernment, becauſe there is a great deal of labour and diligence uſed againſt your ſouls, and againſt your ſalvation; As firſt, by the Devil, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *He goes about like a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour:* And *Iob* 1. when God asked the Divel, *Whence he came*, he tells him, *I come from compaſſing the earth to and fro.* The Divel is ſtil induſtrious and indefatigable to damn ſouls; he went compaſſing the earth to damn ſouls. Why (O Beloved) ſhal the Divel uſe diligence to damn thy ſoul, and *Rule* 4.

wilt thou use none to save it? Shall he go about compassing the earth to damn thee, and wilt not thou stir one foot in Ordinances and Duties, and all to save that poor soul of thine? Again, as the Devil, so wicked men, they use diligence against the soul also, *Matth.* 23. 15. It is said of the *Pharisees*, *They would compass sea and land to make one Proselyte, and when they had made him, they made him twofold more a child of hell then before.* Mark how indefatigable they would be, they would take so great a journey to damn a poor soul; thus are wicked men. *Eph.* 4. 14. It is said of false Teachers, *They lie in wait to deceive*; they will be so industrious, they will lie and watch opportunities. Beloved, look over the world, how industrious will your companions be to draw you to sin, to draw you to the Alehouse, to draw you to profanness? And therefore seeing wicked men use diligence to damn your souls, have not you reason in all matters of soul-concernment to put forth a great deal of diligence?

Reas. 5. 5 Because wicked men put forth a great deal of diligence to damn their own souls, and you your selves have done so in the daies of your unregeneracy. What pains will a Drunkard take to sit all day and all night at his pots? What pains will a Robber take to indure the darkness of the night, the coldness of weather, the danger of being taken, and all to break open a house to get a little gain? What diligence will an Adulterer use to watch for a Harlot in the twilight, in the evening tide? Why? Shall wicked men (in the phrase of *Habakuk*) *weary themselves in vanities*, tire out themselves to damn their own souls; and wilt thou do nothing to save thy soul? It's said of wicked men, *Micah* 7. 3. *They do evil with both hands greedily*: A man may sin with *one* hand enough to damn him; yet they were so eager they would sin with *both*. Shall wicked men put forth both hands to sin, and wilt not thou put a finger to holiness, put a hand to the waies of God? you have a phrase, *Ier.* 23. 10. *Their whole course is evil, and therefore it is not right*: A strange expression! God doth there complain of men, that they were not onely wicked, but they were forcibly evil; they were strong in their wickedness, and laborious in their profaneness: And shall wicked men force

force God to damn them, as it were; shall wicked men be violent in a way of sin, and wilt not thou with one hand, labour to save thy soul? An old Father seeing a Gentlewoman spend three hours in beholding her face in a Glass, to trim her self, when she came down he fell a weeping; being asked why he wept? answered, because this woman hath spent more hours in a morning to damn her self, then ever I spent in Religious duties to save my soul. Alas! many men are more diligent to damn themselves, then many of us are to save our souls; which should strongly engage you to put forth diligence in all matters of soul-concernment.

Reas. 6.

6. Because the more diligent thou art, the less busie and operative will the motions of sin and suggestions of Satan be in thy Spirit. It is the speech of *Bernard*, By how much the more (saith he) the Devil finds a man well imployed, by so much the less will he be able to fasten a temptation upon him. The more diligent, the more industrious you are in heavens way, the less force will the temptation of the Devil have upon you. I remember it was the speech of Mr. *Greenham*, That when the Devil tempted a poor soul, she came to him for advice to resist the temptation, and he gave her this Answer: Never be idle, but be alwaies well imployed; for in my own experience I found this, When the Devil came to tempt me, I would tell the Devil, I am not at leisure to hearken to thy temptations: and by this means I did resist his assaults. Beloved, tell the Devil when he tempts you, you are not at leisure to lend an ear to his temptations, and then he will never fasten upon you. The Devil never gets advantage of us, but either when we are out of Gods way, or idle, or have our hands in some sinful imployment; and then the Devil gets power over us. If once you slack in diligence, in this spiritual industry, you do even tempt the Devil to tempt you: you lay your selves open to a world of sin, and a world of snares. As you know it is with water, whilest the stream keeps running, it keeps clear; but let it stand still, it breeds frogs and toads, and all manner of filth. So while you keep going, you keep clear; but do but once slag in your diligence, and stand still, and O what a puddle

ut jugulent homines, surgunt de nocte latrones.

of filth and sin will thy heart be! The Keys that you keep in your pocket, and use every day, are bright; but keyes seldom used, the very rust eats them out. So it is with your graces; not used with diligence, they will soon grow rustie, and decay; the less diligent you are, the more will sin and Satan fasten upon you. *Heb.* 6. 12. *We desire you* saith the Apostle, *every one of you to shew the same diligence*: to what? *that you be not slothful.* As if he should say, if once you slack in diligence, the sin of slothfulness will soon grow upon you, Whereas now, the more diligent you are, the less busie and operative will the suggestions of Satan, and the operations of sin be in thy soul. *While men sleep, the enemy came and sowed tares*, *Mat.* 13. 25. As you know it is with the body, A man that is given to live a Sedentarie life, a life of sitting, those bodies are more exposed to ill humors, (And therefore the life of Scholars is a life exposed most to diseases) but those whose livelyhoods are in handicraft trades, alwaies in motion, and stirring; the motion expels the ill humors, that they cannot seize upon the body. It is so in the soul; the less you act in matters of soul-concernment, the more spiritual diseases and spiritual infirmities will grow upon you. Whereas the more active and industrious you are, the lesse power will ill distempers and humours have to seize upon the soul.

Reas. 7. 7. Because the more diligent you are in matters pertaining to the soul, the nearer resemblance and conformitie you carry to Jesus Christ: you read of Christ, that he went about alwaies doing good: And when his father and mother mist him, and went three daies sorrowing to seek him, and having found him, askt him, where hast thou been? *Wot ye not*, saith Christ, *I was about my Fathers businesse*? As if he should say, I was not about any evil work, but to glorifie my God, and promote the honour of my Father: this was my work. And elsewhere he tells us, *it was his meat and drink, to do the will of his Father*: Here was a diligent person indeed. Why the more industrious you are, and the more diligent you are in matters of the soul, the more like you are to Jesus Christ. And where can there be a better pattern for

for you to reſemble, or a better Copy for you to write by?

8. Becauſe the more diligent you are in this imployment, the more peace, and the more profit will accrue to your own ſouls. The more peace will accrue, the more induſtrious you are, 2 *Pet.* 3. 14. *Be you diligent* (ſaith the Apoſtle) for what? *that you may be found of Chriſt in peace without ſpot, and blameleſs.* So *Iſa.* 32. 17. *The work of righteouſneſs is peace, and the effect thereof quietneſs for ever.* It is not the bare habit, or having of grace that is peace; but it is the working of it and being induſtrious in it, and the acting of it in your lives that brings peace to your ſouls, And then it will not onely bring peace, but it brings profit alſo. I may ſay as *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 13. 4. *The hand of the diligent maketh rich.* I am ſure the hand of a diligent Chriſtian, that is induſtrious in Gods wayes, will make him rich in grace; when thoſe who are ſpiritual ſluggards, will come to ſpiritual poverty. So 1 *Cor.* 15. laſt; *Be ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.* If then you are induſtrious in the work of grace, it ſhall not be in vain, but you ſhall get by all that you do in the Lord. *Reaſ.* 8.

9. Becauſe you have loſt more grace in a little time then you can ever regain by all the diligence you can put fort, ſhould you live never ſo long. You had all graces once in *Adam*, but *Adam* by one morſel of forbidden fruit loſt all that grace, which you cannot now regain by never ſo much diligence. Should you pray till you can ſpeak no more; and ſhould you ſigh to the breaking of your loyns; ſhould every word be a ſigh, and every ſigh a tear, and every tear a drop of blood, you would never be able to recover that grace which you loſt in *Adam*; You obliterated the beautiful image of God; You loſt that knowledge by the commiſſion of one ſin which you cannot regain by ten thouſand Sermons; or doing ten thouſand Duties. Have not you therefore need of diligence, ſeeing you have loſt ſo much in ſo little time, which by all your diligence you will never fully recover? *Reaſ.* 9.

10. Becauſe the beſt of you have lived a long time either uſing diligence to damn your ſelves, or elſe taking no care to *Reaſ.* 10.

ſave

save your selves, one or both; therefore you had need now to set about the work. Beloved, I may say as *Seneca* did of the heathen, That a great part of mans life doth pass away in doing evil, the greatest part in doing nothing, the whole of a mans life in doing other things then he should do. And truly so I may say to you, a great part of your lives hath past in sinning away your salvation, in taking pains to damn your own souls; and if not so gross, I believe a great part hath past away in doing nothing for your salvation, in not praying for salvation, in not hearing for salvation, in not reading for salvation, in not mourning for salvation, in doing nothing for heaven: and if it be so, that you have thus spent your time, you have great cause now to put your hand to the work, and to use all diligence in matters pertaining to your salvation. A man going a journey, that hath gone the greatest part of his time out of his way, he had need mend his pace when he comes into the right way again: so if we have spent the most part of our time in vain, we had need give the more diligence for the time to come.

Magna pars vitæ nihil agendo, maxima malè, tota aliud agendo elabitur. Senec.

SERMON II.

1 Pet. 2. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.

HAving in the morning finished the doctrinal part of this general point, I shall now onely make a short Use, and then pass to the particulars wherein you should be diligent.

Use 1. 1. Now is it true, that in all matters of soul-Concernment you must put forth a great deal of diligence? Then first in applying this Doctrine, I must proceed by way of Caution, and I shall lay down four Cautions, that you may not run into any mistakes about this point. First,

Caut. 2.

Firſt, That though God calls for a great deal of diligence at your hands in the matters of your ſouls, yet this doth no way preſuppoſe, as if you could draw out, or put forth this diligence by your own native power; but that God that commands your ſtrength, that God muſt give you ſtrength to do what he commands. *Pſal.* 68.28. *Thy God hath commanded thy ſtrength:* What then? can a man therefore put forth his own ſtrength? No, but the prayer follows; *Strengthen, O God, that which thou commandeſt us.* Implying, that though God did command their ſtrength, they could not put it out by their own power: but they would make a prayer to back the command, *Lord thou commandeſt us to be ſtrong; Lord, ſtrengthen that which thou commandeſt.* So that though God call for your diligence, and call for your ſtrength; yet cannot you put forth any ſtrength by your own power. *Auſtine* upon this conſideration hath this paſſage; when I have a will, ſaith he, to do good I have not a power; and when I have power, I have not a will; and herein I ſee my own weakneſs, and that I muſt be beholding to Chriſt for ſtrength. You can as well carry on the work of Creation, as the work of Converſion by your own ſtrength. You can as well conquer a world of armed men alone, as conquer one Suggeſtion of the Devil by your own power. Though God doth call for your obedience, and to put forth your diligence, yet this ſuppoſeth not, as if you could do this by your own ſtrength; but that God that Commands you diligence, that God muſt ſtir it up in you.

2. When God calls for your diligence in matters of ſoul-concernment take this Caution; that you do not diſcharge your duty in expreſſing a great deal of zeal and diligence in matters of your ſoul, unleſs you do it in a right manner, and to a right end. People think, if they can be diligent in hearing, and diligent in reading, and diligent in praying, and in receiving Sacraments; that then they diſcharge their duty, and anſwer the command of my Text, to be diligent. No Beloved, you do not anſwer your duty to God in expreſſing diligence in that which is materially good, unleſs you do it in a right manner, and to a right end: You have an inſtance in *Iehu*, 2 *King.* 10. He was a marvellous induſtrious man in many good matters

matters concerning the worship of God; at one time he killed the worshippers of *Baal*, at another time he pulled down the houses where they worshipped, and broke the graven Images in pieces. At another time he cals out to *Iehonadab, to see his zeal for the Lord of Hosts.* Wonderful diligent! & yet al this was not done in a good manner, nor to a right end. Not in a good manner, because it was done by halfes, not throughly; for though he destroyed the Images of *Baal*, yet he worshipt the Idols at *Bethel*. And then not to a right end, because he did not shew his zeal and industry out of any supreme reference to Gods glory, but onely out of a politick end, to establish himself in his kingdom, 2 *Kin.* 10. 31. So that you may put forth such diligence in reading, and hearing & in receiving, and the like; and yet, if not done in a right manner, and to a right end, you do not performe the duty of my Text. For take this as a rule in Divinity, that when God commands a duty, all the circumstances included in the duty must be observed or else, that duty is not done aright. As when you pray, you must not leave out one circumstance or quality required in a prayer; if so, God will not accept your prayer. So here, God commands your diligence, if you are not diligent in a right manner, and to a right end, your diligence is not right.

Caut. 3.

Causæ sine quibus non.

3. Though you put forth never so much diligence in the matters of your soul, all those acts you do, are none of them meritorious: you do not get heaven for praying, nor get heaven for reading, nor get heaven for hearing, though haply you get not heaven without it. Good works, they may be causes of salvation in this sense, causes without which you cannot be saved; but all your obedience, and all your diligence are no causes for which you are saved, or which may any way move God to save you. So that though you are never so diligent, this diligence is not meritorious at al: Why? Because to make it meritorious, say Divines, three things must concur; First, The thing must be done freely, not as a debt. Secondly, it must be done *with a mans own native and proper strength*, and not a borrowed power. Thirdly, It must be done perfectly: and therefore Divines say, (and that upon good reason too) That all our obedience, nd all our actings in the wayes of grace cannot be meritorious: Why? Because

Becauſe (*Firſt*) We do them not as a free gift, but as a due debt: we owe God this diligence, and owe him this duty; and therefore cannot merit, becauſe we only pay God his due. If you lend a man money, will you thank and reward him to pay you your own? No: it is your due, he ought to repay you. All duties in matters of the ſoul are Gods due, of right belonging to him, and therefore cannot be meritorious.

Secondly, This diligence, could you put it forth by your own ſtrength, you had ſomewhat wherein to boaſt; but all your diligence is put forth by a borrowed ſtrength, by a ſtrength derived from Jeſus Chriſt, by a ſtrength from the Covenant of grace; it is thence you fetch power to perform all acts of obedience and ſpiritual diligence.

Thirdly, it cannot merit, becauſe it is not perfect: nay, yo are ſo far from meriting by your obedience, that you merit nothing but hell for the defects in your obedience, and the imperfections that are remaining in your beſt ſervices.

Caut. 4. 4. Take this Caution, That though all the diligence you can put forth cannot be meritorious for God to ſave you; yet take this for a truth, that the more you abound in ſpiritual induſtrie in the matters of the Soul, the more likely you are to receive fuller incomes of joy, and fuller increaſe of grace in your ſouls: *To him that hath ſhall be given, and it ſhall be given him much more abundantly*: That is, to him that hath improved his graces, and uſed them well, they ſhall be given more abundantly: *Thou haſt been faithfull in a little, thou ſhalt be ruler over much.* The more you act, and the more diligent you are in the matters of your ſoul, the more likely you are to be eminent and increaſing in grace above others. It is a note that an Author hath upon the Apoſtle *Paul*; *Paul* was the moſt eminent of all the Apoſtles; no Apoſtle like *Paul*, none outſtript him: Now Divines aske the reaſon, why *Paul* ſhould be more eminent then the reſt of the Apoſtles who ſaw Chriſt in the fleſh, whereas *Paul* ſaw him onely in a viſion, and no where elſe; yet *Paul* was more eminent then any other Apoſtle? and they give this reaſon: *Paul* was *in labours more abundant*, *Paul* was more induſtrious, putting out his gifts and graces, and God did bleſs that induſtry with a ful-

ler increaſe of the graces of Gods ſpirit then others had: So that, though God gives us not heaven for our growth in grace; yet ordinarily God inrails a greater meaſure and increaſe of gifts upon the well uſing of them while we are in this world: *Open your mouthes wide, and God will fill them.* The more wide we are in our deſires and expectations, the more we ſhall be filled.

Uſe 2. 2. For Reprehenſion. Is it ſo, that in all matters of ſoul-concernment we ſhould put forth a great deal of diligence? then this ſhould be a great ſcourge to that ſluggiſhneſs of ſpirit that moſt men in the world are guilty of. What benummedneſs, and what ſluggiſhneſs of ſpirit do moſt men lie under? Many men are as *David* was, 1 *Kings* 1.1. who when he grew old, he was ſo cold no clothes could warme him. There are many men, that haply have been hot and zealous in profeſſion; yet in proceſs of time they grow ſo cold, that all Ordinances cannot warm them, And though ordinarily, *the words of the wiſe* (ſaith *Solomon*) *are as nails and goads*; they are as nails to faſten us in a courſe of profeſſion, they are as goads to put us on; every Ordinance is as a goad in our ſide, ſtill putting us on in a courſe of holineſs: yet O that ſluggiſhneſe, and O that deadneſs of ſpirit that lies upon mens hearts! they go but a ſnails pace in the way to heaven; whereas they can run as faſt as a Dromedarie in the waies of ſin.

It is the Obſervation of a Rabbi, That the Snail above all other creatures, was by God pronounced unclean, becauſe of its ſlow and eaſie pace: God looks upon thee as an unclean man, and an unclean woman, that haſt a ſluggiſh and a ſlow ſpirit in matters of Chriſtianity: There are many men that like no life like an idle life; they are never weary ſo much, as they are weary of doing good, and weary of duties; an hour at a Sermon, a day at a faſt, a little time at a prayer quite tires them; whereas waies of vanity, and waies of pleaſure they are never weary of. It was the ſpeech of that Epicure *Marcus Lepidus*, who lying under a ſhady tree upon a Sunſhine day, ſtretching himſelf, cries out, O would to God this were to take pains to live at eaſe. There are many men

O utinam hoc eſſet laborare.

as

as sottish as he: they could wish, I would to God to sit in a Tavern were the way to go to heaven; I would to God to walk in the fields, to sit at the door on the Sabbath day, that this were the way to heaven; many men would be saved more easily! Why, how should this condemn that great sluggishness and idleness of mens spirits, that they do so little in the matters of soul-concernments?

Beloved, you have cause to labour, because you find many that have taken pains for heaven, that never came to heaven. *Many shall strive to enter, but shall not be able, Luke* 13. Had not you therefore need to take heed? Nay beloved, suppose (it is a supposition *Ægidius* hath, though not true, yet I say suppose it) that all the world should be saved but one man, yet, saith he, you have cause to take pains to be happy, lest you should be that one man should perish. If all the world should be saved but one man onely; if one man should be damned, I have cause to labour with all my might, that I be not that one man. Here then, great cause you have not to lye under sluggishness, in all matters pertaining to the soul: You have a great deal to do, and haply but a little time; if you knew the greatness of your work and shortness of your time, haply you would now set about the business of your salvation. It was the speech of young King *Charles* of *Sicily* lying upon his death bed, I have scarce yet begun to live, and now, woe is me, I am compelled to dye. Beloved, Many of you may have cause to say thus, you have scarce yet done one good action that may give you any evidence to be happy with Christ another day: Happily you have not yet begun to be Christians, and you may be soon called to dye: and what an affliction would this be to you, that you have hardly begun to live the life of grace, and yet you must dye the life of nature? This Diligence is conversant about many things: 1. In getting grace. Here you have a great work to do, to get grace, *Above all getting get understanding*: And the difficulty of getting grace doth shew the goodness of grace. As we say in nature, the most vile things are most obvious to the eye, and most common to be found; you have stones and dirt every where; but things of more excellent nature are more hard to come by; if you would have Gold, you must dig into the

Si unus tantùm homo damnandus esset, cæteri que omnes salvandi; Ego totis viribus annitererer ne esset ille solus.

Talis diligentia respicit tantam rem, tantæ res requivit talem diligentiam.

the earth; if you would have Pearl, you must dive into the sea: things that are excellent, nature hath made them hard to come by. This shewes the goodness of those matters which concern the soul, that they are very hard to be got, Prov. 2. 2, 4. *Seek for wisdom as for silver, and dig for it as for hidden Treasure.* And then, 2. Diligence is required not onely to get grace but to keep it; and it is no lesse skill in keeping grace, then to get it, there are so many temptations lie in your way. And then, 3. To watch the heart, that doth conspire against your grace, and against your soul: Prov. 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.* 4. In examining the heart: *Psal.* 64. 6. *The heart is deep*; and *Psal.* 77. 6. All these considered, you have cause to take pains in all the matters of the soul.

Non minor est virtus quam quærere, parta tueri.

Thus having finished this doctrine; I now pass to the Particulars, to which this diligence is applied. *Give diligence*: to what? Why, *To make your Calling and Election sure.* From whence, the second Observation I shall draw, is this:

Doct. 2. *That Christians that profess the Gospel, ought to put forth a great deal of industry and diligence to make this sure to their souls, that they are effectually called, and eternally elected. Give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.*

Now I cannot handle this Doctrine in the bulk of it, but must of necessity take it into parts, and handle it piece by piece, that so I may give you the strength of the whole Observation in the Application of it. And seeing Calling lies in the front, I shall in a few Sermons treat of that. And the Point from thence will be this:

Doct. 3. *That Christians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this sure to their souls, that they are effectually Called.*

Beloved, this is a very material Point I am now upon, especially in this deceitfull age, wherein men plunge themselves into a gulfe of presumption, wherein many times men take faith upon trust, and Christ upon trust. It is meet that you that live under the Gospel, should try your Calling by the Gospel, whether it be true or no; there may be an externall Call, when there is no inward calling by the operation of the Spirit upon your hearts.

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In the managing of this Point, I ſhall ſhew you theſe three things.

Firſt, What effectual Calling is.

Secondly, Why you are required to put forth a great deal of diligence to make your Calling ſure to your ſouls.

Thirdly, By what Characters or Diſcoveries you may be aſſured in your own hearts that you are effectually called.

Firſt, What effectual Calling is. You ſay we muſt make it ſure, therefore what is the nature of it? For anſwer, you may take this deſcription of it.

Effectuall Calling is the fruit of Gods Election, whereby God of his free grace works a wonderful change in the heart of an Elect perſon, by the inward operation of the Spirit accompanying the outward Miniſtry of the word; by vertue of which, the ſoul is brought from under the dominion of ſin and Satan into a ſtate of grace, and ſo made meet for the enjoyment of God in glory. Now I ſhall not take this apart, but commit it to your memory and judgment to apprehend: Onely in this diſcription there are laid down foure differences to diſtinguiſh effectual Calling from that ordinary or outward Calling that wicked men have by the Miniſtry of the word. As

1. Effectual Calling in the deſcription, is ſaid to be a *fruit of Gods Election*; but outward or general Calling is a fruit only of common providence. God by an over-ruling providence ſends the Goſpel among a people, and thereby calls them to an outward compliance and conformity; but effectual Calling is a fruit of Gods Election.

2. It is ſaid in the deſcription, that Effectual Calling, it changes the heart, *whereby God works a wonderful change in the heart*: but an external Calling no way reacheth the heart, onely works ſome kind of civil or common alteration in the life.

3 Its ſaid, effectual Calling is wrought *by the inward operation of the Spirit accompanying the outward Miniſtry of the word*; whereas an External Call is onely by the word, but no inward ſaving work of the Spirit at all,

4. Its ſaid of Effectual Calling, that it is from the *Dominion of ſin*; but External Calling is onely from the external acts.

acts of ſin. Indeed by an external calling the word may have that power over a man, as to reſtrain and keep in the viſible and external actings of ſin, but in no way works upon the inclination to take off the affection from ſin: whereas the effectual Calling works upon the heart, and works to the ſubduing and deſtroying of the power of ſin, as well as the actings of it.

Secondly, Why doth God require, that we ſhould put forth ſuch great diligence in making ſure that we are effectually called, by the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt in the Goſpel? There are three Reaſons why this ſhould be.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, becauſe there are many profeſſing the Goſpel, that do harbour ungrounded perſwaſions that they are effectually called, when they are not. Now if any man be deceived, why may not you? And if any are apt to be deceived about this matter, have not you great cauſe to be diligent, leſt you are deceived alſo? The Jews of old, they boaſted of their Calling, and ſaid, *We have Abraham to our father*: but Chriſt confutes that; *If you were Abrahams children* (ſaith he) *you would do the works of Abraham*: *but you ſeek to kill me, which Abraham did not.* But then they go higher, *Iohn* 8.46. they were effectually called, *For God is our Father*: No ſaith Chriſt, *You are of your father the Devil*: Thus many men run into theſe groſſe miſtakes, to believe they are effectually called, when they are not. Many are called outwardly that are not called effectually, *Matth.* 22. 14. And therefore it concerns you, not to be deceived in this great buſineſs.

Reaſ. 2. Secondly, becauſe there is this natural aptneſs in all of us, in things that are of any value concerning the body, you will be ſure to make ſure of them. It may be, if you have Braſs and Pewter, or baſer Mettals, your Kitchin ſhall ſerve for that; but things of greater value, as Pearls and Diamonds, they muſt be in the Cloſet, and in a Cabinet in that Cloſet, you will be ſure to enſure them. Why how much more ſhould you enſure this great and precious Jewel of Effectual Calling, that ſo much concerns your immortal ſouls? When you buy Land, you will be ſure your Title is good; to draw up your evidence, ſo as to be firm in Law. You know Merchants,

chants, if they venture a great or most part of their estate at sea, where happily there may be hazard in the Voyage, they will run speedily to ensure a great part of their Commodities. Beloved, this should you do; this body of yours is the Ship, and the Merchandize and Fraight in this Ship is your souls; and this Ship is going a great Voyage to Glory, Glory is the Port whither this Ship is to come; you shall meet with many dangers in your way, haply with storms and tempests of temptation; yea, haply you may run upon the rocks of presumption, or quick-sands of despaire. O now, run to the ensuring Office: whats that? why, run to seek the Testimony of Christs Spirit in your own spirit, by the word, to evidence unto you upon good ground, that the Ship shall be safe, and the Commodities brought secure to the Haven; that Ship, Body, Soul, and all shall come safe to Heaven. Beloved, if men will thus ensure their Estates, you have much more reason to ensure your souls. For believe it, if you make not sure your souls, if you suffer shipwrak, ye are turned Bankrupts presently; Bankrupt to God, you lose him for ever. It is said of an old Usurer, That when any man came to borrow money of him, he would hardly trust one in twenty; and being asked the reason, Why he would do so? O (saith he) it is good to be sure. Why (Beloved) shall a Usurer in all his wayes be so secure, and so heedful in all his disbursments, that he could say, It is good to be sure; and may not I much more say to you, It is good to be sure of Heaven? It is good to be sure you are effectually called by Jesus Christ; it is good to be sure that you are Christians in truth, not in name only; that you are Christians in Deed, not in Profession only. O it is good to make your Calling and Election sure.

Thirdly, Christians should labour to assure this, because the more assured you are of your Effectual Calling, the more it will heighten and increase your inward peace and comfort, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *In whom believing ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory.* It is very observable, that in all the Epistles of the new Testament, where the Apostle speaks of their effectual calling to be Saints, in the very next verse he salutes them with these words, *Grace and peace be towards you,* 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. *You* *Reas.* 3.

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are called to be Saints, Grace and Peace be towards you. Rom. 1. 6,7. *Called to be Saints, Grace and Peace be multiplyed towards you:* and ſo in every Epiſtle beſides; to note, that when a man is effectually called, the more aſſurance he hath of his calling, the more peace he hath in his own conſcience. It will greaten your peace, and greaten your inward comforts; therefore you ſhould labour after this aſſurance of your effectual calling.

And thus having ſhewed you what effectual calling is, and why you muſt give diligence to make this ſure; I now paſs to a third Querie.

What are the Characters or diſcoveries, whereby my ſoul may be aſſured that I am effectually called by Jeſus Chriſt? And in the diſpatch of this, I ſhall reſolve it onely by theſe two general heads.

Firſt, You may be aſſured of your effectual calling, if God hath taken that method with your ſouls, which he doth ordinarily take with thoſe whom he doth effectually call.

Secondly, If the Lord hath wrought in you thoſe ſaving effects or concomitants, which do ordinarily accompany thoſe that are thus effectually called: if theſe two things be done, you may have a ſeal and aſſurance in your own hearts that you alſo are effectually called. Beloved, it is not for Miniſters to flatter you; there are among many in the world but few that are called; among many that are called but few that are elected; and therefore do not flatter your ſelves. If upon trial you find you are not in the number of Gods called ones, go home and bewail your unregenerate and unconverted eſtate. But before I can ſpeak of this method, I muſt firſt lay down ſome miſtakes that are held by erroneous mindes about the method God takes in calling a ſinner home to himſelf.

A firſt miſtake is of the *Pelagians*, who hold this, that a man is able to call and convert himſelf. Now this opinion doth quite exclude and juſtle out God from having any hand therein: they ſay a Chriſtian is able to call and convert himſelf, having only a general concurrence and aſſiſtance from God.

2. Of the *Arminians*, and they hold this, That effectual calling conſiſts only in moral perſwaſions, and may be reſiſted by the perſon that is thus called; and that a man being called

into a state of grace, may fall from his calling and fall from his grace, and so have no profit by his calling at all; which is a most uncomfortable opinion: and surely God would never take this method in calling of his people.

3. That of the Papists; and they say that God calls and ordains a sinner to glory, but it is upon the foresight of his good works. God foresaw how good and holy the man would be, and therefore God would chuse and call him to glory: But this hath no ground from Scripture neither.

4 That of the *Familists*; and they hold this, That Gods method in calling a sinner is not by the outward Ministry of the Word, but it is by Raptures and Revelations, and by divine inspirations, and extraordinary wayes of working: but this is not Gods usual method, though God sometimes takes this way, as he did by *Paul*, who was called this way after an extraordinary manner: Yet this is not Gods ordinary rule.

5. There is another mistake, and that is of those who press a necessity of such measures of legal horrour and terrour upon the consciences of men, else they can never be saved. Sometimes Ministers have been so harsh now and then, (though indeed no such cause to blame them as is pretended) yet sometimes lashes break out, that men must be so and so humbled, in such a measure, and so long for duration. Now this is not Gods method to press for measure, but a great mistake about Gods manner of calling a sinner; though I must confess, this is the neareſt of all the five, to that rule God takes in calling a sinner to glory. Having thus laid down the mistakes, tis the easier now to find out the truth. I come now to speak of that method God takes in calling a sinner. And here I shall lay down a sixfold method, in which God proceeds with those whom he doth effectually call, which if he doth so with you, you may go home with a seal upon your hearts, that you are effectually called to grace, and you shall one day come to glory.

First, When God goes about effectually to call a poor sinner into a state of grace, he puts a clear light into his soul, whereby he may see the hainous and aggravated nature of all his sins more then ever he did before. *Rom.* 7. 8, 9, 13. *Paul* tells

you, *Before the commandement came, he was alive, and ſin was dead*; that is, before the power of the word came upon his conſcience to convert him, he was alive; *i. e.* he thought he was a good man, and a juſt man, and he thought ſin was dead, ſin was deſtroyed; he never knew ſin ſo ſinful: *but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died*: but when the word of God came with power upon my conſcience, and light upon my judgement, then I ſaw I was a dead man, ſin had kild me, and I ſaw ſin was reigning and ſin was raging in me: and what then? ver. 13. *I ſaw ſin exceeding ſinful*: he never ſaw ſin ſo before converſion, before his Call, when he was a *Phariſee*; but when the word of God came with power upon his conſcience to call him, then ſaith he, *I ſaw ſin to be exceeding ſinful.* Now (O Beloved) hath ever God done thus with your ſouls? may be you look upon ſin with a tranſient and general view; but do you look upon ſin ſo as to ſee more evil in ſin then ever you ſaw before? This is the courſe God uſually takes. Me thinks God deals with a converted ſinner, as it is ſpoken in *Iob* 33. 27, 21. *He looketh upon men, and if any ſay I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right, and it doth not profit me, he will deliver his ſoul from going down into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light*: that is, God looks upon the maſs of mankind in the world, and ſaith, if any man ſay he hath ſinned, and it did not profit him, that is, if he look upon ſin as an evil, and that he never did get good by it: then ſaith God, I will deliver his ſoul from hell, and bring him to heaven.

Object. Yea, but you will ſay, May be ſometimes God may do thus to affright men, and trouble men in mind, make them ſee their ſins: but is this Gods uſual work?

Anſw. Yes it is, ver. 29. *Lo theſe things worketh God oftentimes with men.* Mark, it is not a ſeldom work, but it is Gods work often, he will make you ſee your ſins, ſee them to be fruitleſs, and ſee them to be unprofitable; *Lo, theſe things God worketh oftentimes with men.* Hence you read, *Iohn* 16. 8. *When the Spirit ſhall come* (marke his Office) *he ſhall convince the world of ſin*: The firſt act of the Spirit in converting a ſoul, and calling him, is to convince him of ſin. And I Remember *Piſcator* thinks this accompliſhed in *Acts* 2. 37. *When they ſaw their ſin in crucifying*

cifying of Ieſus Chriſt; this is the firſt work of the Spirit of God, in you Calling; he will convince you of ſin. Now, O Beloved, to how many do I ſpeak this day, with whom God hath never taken this Method, ſince they were born into the world? How many are there that have been told of their drunkenneſs, and told of their luſts, and of their deceits, and of their licencious living from day to day; and yet to this day they never ſaw ſin to be exceeding ſinful; they never were convinced of ſin to purpoſe? If they did indeed ſee their ſin, 1. it was but a tranſient ſight, ſoon come and ſoon gone; or elſe 2. it was but a general ſight, to ſay we are all ſinners; or 3. If they did ſee their ſin, it was but a confuſed ſight; no way diſtinct: or 4. If they did ſee ſin, it was an unhumbling ſight; the ſight of ſin did never humble them in Gods ſight. I intreat you, Beloved, Do not lay hold or have hopes of being effectually called, if God hath not ſhewn you the hainous and aggravated nature of your ſins. There is a ſpeech, *Iob* 36. 9, 10. *He firſt ſhews to men their works, and their tranſgreſſions, that they have exceeded; and then he opens their ears to diſcipline, and commands them to return from evil.* Mark, then the Lord doth it, when he makes them ſee their tranſgreſſions, that they have exceeded; Now, have you ſeen that you have exceeded in your Paſſions, and in your Pride? have you ſeen ſin to be exceeding ſinful? this is Gods firſt work; and happy are you that are brought into Chriſts School, that Chriſt doth take this Method withall.

2. After God hath put a ſight into the ſoul, to make you ſee the ſinfulneſs of ſin; then 2. God faſtens theſe thoughts on the ſoul, to make you ſenſible of the great miſery that your ſins have brought you into; to cry out with *Paul*, Rom. 7. 24. *Wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* There *Paul* cryes out of his wretchedneſs and miſery, by reaſon of that body of death, the ſinfulneſs of his nature, which he confeſſes did as much trouble him as if a dead body ſhould be tied to his living body; alluding to the cuſtome of the *Romans*, in puniſhing notorious Malefactors; which he takes to be a moſt grievous puniſhment. Why Beloved, have you ever ſeen this? did you ever ſee that miſery that ſin

brought upon you? that ſin did deveſt you of righteouſneſſe, did rob you of your God, baniſh you from his preſence, intitle you to hell, and make you objects of his wrath? Now were you ſenſible of this miſery? this is Gods method, to make you ſee your miſery by reaſon of ſin.

3. God puts the ſoul into a kind of ſpiritual aſtoniſhment, that the poor ſinner doth not know where to go, what courſe to take, which way to turn, how he may get pardon for his ſin, and recovery from his miſerie. This you finde mentioned as Gods method, *Acts* 2. 37. upon 3000 at once, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do to be ſaved?* They were even in a maze, the word wrought upon them, and they ſaw Jeſus Chriſt crucified to be their ſin; and now they cry out in great aſtoniſhment, *Men and Brethren. what ſhall we do to be ſaved?* When God effectually calls a man, he will leave him a little to himſelf, that he knows not which way in the world to turn him. Now when I ſpeak of ſpiritual Aſtoniſhment, miſtake me not; for firſt, I preſſe not ſuch a meaſure of Humiliation, nor ſuch a meaſure of trouble of minde, how great it muſt be; Nor Secondly, do I preſſe the duration of it, how long it muſt be; that you muſt be ſo long and ſo long. Nor Thirdly, do I preſſe an abſolute neceſſity of this, as if a man could not be called without it. Indeed we read of *Lydia, that her heart was opened*, and ſhe never troubled nor aſtoniſht; and God ſometimes works thus in an extraordinary way: but I preſſe this, that ordinarily, its Gods method in ſome meaſure or other, at ſome time or other, to put his People in ſuch a plung, that they ſhall not know which way in the world to turn themſelves. And ſo were thoſe 3000 *Acts* 2. They could not tell what they ſhould do to be ſaved.

And here further, if you ask me, With whom doth God moſt of all take this courſe, to put them into ſuch ſpirituall amazement; to put them into horror and terror about their everlaſting eſtate? I anſwer, firſt, Thoſe that have lived in a courſe of prophaneneſſe before Converſion; let them look to it: if thou haſt been a knottie and ſtout-hearted ſinner againſt God, God muſt give thee many a blow before he can hammer thee to his own will. You that have been guiltie of

Drun-

Drunkenneſſe, and guiltie of Adultery, or guiltie of Sabbath-breaking in a groſſe and licencious way, that have made this world a ſtage to act wickedneſſe upon, look to it; boaſt not of your Calling: if God hath not brought you in this way, you have ground to ſuſpect you are not yet called. They that before Converſion were looſe in their lives, if they find not this ſpiritual amazement, it is not likely they are called. And therefore I verily ſuſpect your Call, that can jump out of a courſe of profaneneſſe, into a courſe of Profeſſion; that can jump from a courſe of Malignitie to delight to hear Sermons, and love Miniſters. You that have been oppoſers of godlineſſe, if you do not ſhew an eminent work in your Converſion, I greatly ſuſpect whether you are converted or no: becauſe it is Gods uſual Method, if men have been men of groſſe lives before calling, to bring them to great aſtoniſhment when they are called.

2. You that have often withſtood, and ſtill withſtand Gods call; that Sermon after Sermon, and invitation after invitation would not gain upon you; do you look about you: God will give you many a blow, God will ſend you many a ſad hour, before he brings you to your peace.

3. Thoſe that have often ſinned againſt Conſcience, that do as it were lay Conſcience waſt; that are prodigall of ſinning, not caring for ſinning againſt never ſo much light, and never ſo much conviction. Beloved, you ſhall not have ſo eaſie a coming to heaven: God will firſt lay many ſtrokes upon you, and draw heavie groanes from you. *David* ſaith, *By reaſon of thy terrors I am afraid, and my bones are dried up*: You are ſubject to moſt horror and aſtoniſhment, that do ſin againſt Conſcience. Again,

4. When God hath done thus, made you ſee the aggravated nature of ſin, ſhewn you your miſery by reaſon of ſin, and brought you into ſuch a condition that you cannot tell how to be ſaved; then 4. This is Gods Method, to take you off from your own bottom, beat you off from reſting on duties, and beat you off from dependance upon graces, and beat you off from every thing in your ſelves. This was Gods work in *Paul*, *Phil.* 3. 9, 10. *I was*, ſaith *Paul*, *Circumciſed the eight day, of the*

ſtock

stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; that is, my father and mother were Hebrews: what then? I was *touching the Law, blameless, and*; Mark, he was so standing upon his own legs, upon his own bottom, that he thought himself a holy man, a man blameless touching the Law. *But now*, saith he, *what things were gain to me, I count loss for Christ*; *yea doubtless, I count all things losse, that I might be found in Christ, not having mine own righteousness.* Here *Paul* before Conversion depended upon his holy living, and honest dealing; but now I am converted, and see my folly; now I *desire to be found in Christ, not having mine own righteousness.* See how God did unbottom *Paul* from any goodness in himself, to make him rest upon Jesus Christ: and this is Gods work with thee; he will unbottom thee from thy selfe, and make thee see thou canst not be thine own Saviour.

5. After he hath unbottomed thee from thy self, he puts thee upon earnest longings and looking after Jesus Christ. When the poor soul hath ransacked duties, and gone to this Minister, and the other Minister, to be satisfied; and he sees duties cannot help him, and prayer will not help him; now he thinks, I see none but Christ to lay my head upon: and I see none but a Christ I must make recourse unto: And now he is so longing after Christ, that if all the stones in the streets were gold, and all the building of his house were diamond, and all his garments bespangled with pearle; none of these should interrupt, or stay him from running after Jesus Christ, and this, as I may say, is Gods second work: The three first may be in wicked men, they may see their sin and misery thereby, and be in a maze not knowing which way to go: but these two are a form beyond the wicked; they never unbottom themselves, nor ever have any longings or breathings after Christ at all

6. It is Gods method after all this, to make them find abundance of contentment, and acquiescence in Jesus Christ; that they may have occasion to say, I see I have laid my help upon one that is mightie; I see I have pitcht upon him that is both able and willing to do me good. 2 *Thess.* 2. 16. *Hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace.*

And

And now beloved, having ſpoken of theſe things, how many in the Congregation have I left behind, that haply the Lord hath uſed none of theſe methods with their ſouls? O Lord, I am not able to tell you your miſery, but I intreat you take heed, and do not nuzzel up your ſouls in Preſumption and groundleſs perſwaſions; for believe it, theſe are Gods ordinary methods he takes with moſt ſouls in bringing them to Glory.

SERMON III.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

HAving finiſht the firſt part of the diſcovery, in relation to the method God takes with thoſe whom he doth effectually call: I now proceed to the ſecond way of diſcovery, and that is by thoſe ſaving Concomitants, that do and will accompany a ſoul that is effectually called: and theſe ſaving effects, I ſhall reduce under eight heads.

Firſt, A man effectually called by Chriſt, he doth unfainedly love the word of God, and the Miniſter that preached that word that God did uſe as an inſtrument of his call. Firſt I ſay, he will love the word, *John* 8. 47. *He that is of God,* (that is, he that is called by God) *heareth Gods word, therefore you are not of God, becauſe you hear not his word.* There the Scripture tels us, that they who are of God, effectually called by him, they hear his word with abundance of delight, and abundance of joy and love. So 1 *John* 4. 5, 6. *He that is of God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us.* And therefore *David*, when he would evidence a work of God upon his heart, *Pſal.* 119. 14. *Thy word,* ſaith he, *is as great riches to me* And as if he did not value riches comparable to the word, *verſ.* 72. *I love thy word above thouſands of gold and ſilver.* Beloved,

loved, if you are converted and called by Jesus Christ, you will love the Word of God, that was an instrument of your Call. Wherefore all you that spurn against the Gospel, that cannot endure to have the word come with power upon your consciences; all you that are weary of Ordinances, and find no more savour in an Ordinance of God, then (as *Iob* saith) there is *taste in the white of an egge*; this is an argument you are not yet called. Whats the reason one man will rise early, go far, take pains, and many times neglect his own lawful affairs, and all to enjoy the word: when another man will go by the Church-door, and haply go to a Tavern, and will not go to hear the word at all? Whats the reason? One is called by the word, and the other not: one is called by the Word, and therefore loves it; another is not called, and that makes him neglect it.

2. He doth not onely love the word, but the Minister that by preaching the word was an instrument of his conversion. And therefore it is observable, which some Divines note, That of all men that we read of in Scripture, there was no man did love *Paul* so well as *Timothy*: *For I have no man like minded*, saith *Paul*, *Phil.* 2. 22. *No man that did so naturally care for him, and for the Church of God, as he; For as a son with his father hath he served me.* And whats the reason? Why, *Paul* was the instrument of *Timothies* conversion, and *Timothy* being a Minister, and come to a great pitch in grace, he thought that of all Arguments in the world, that should indear him to love *Paul*, because *Paul* was the Minister that did convert him: therefore he calls him (*1. Tim. 1. 2.*) *Timothy his beloved son in the Faith.* And hence it is, that when the Apostle would draw love from the *Corinthians* to himself, and the Ministers of Christ that were the means of their calling, he urgeth it upon this ground, that they were the means that did beget them to Christ Jesus, *1 Cor. 4. ver.* 1. compared with *ver.* 15, 16. *Let a man so account of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and as Stewards of the mysteries of God.* Why should men so account of them? *For* (ver. 15.) *though you have ten thousand Instructers, yet have you not many Fathers; for in Christ Iesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.* Hereby he would draw out their

their love to him, becauſe he was the inſtrument that did firſt convert them. Now then, put theſe two togeather: A man that is effectually called, he doth both love the Word of Chriſt, that was an inſtrument of his calling; and the Miniſter that preached that word which was the means by which he was called: and try your ſelves by theſe. Many of you haply have ſome good wrought (as you think) upon you, and ſome change in you; but truly let me tell you this, if you are perſons that are out of love with the word, if you are out of love with thoſe Miniſters God made inſtrumental to convert you; you have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect your calling; for you ſee throughout the whole courſe of Scripture, their hearts did cleave with love to them that called them: And therefore they that can ſlight and contemn thoſe Miniſters by whoſe Miniſtry they were brought home to Jeſus Chriſt, they have juſt cauſe of jealouſie to ſuſpect their Call. Again,

2. If God hath effectually called you, he will by his Spirit bring you out of a ſtate of ignorance and darkneſs, and give you ſome meaſure of knowledge, to be acquainted both with the myſteries of God and Chriſt, and the ſinfulneſs of your ſelves more then ever you were before. This the Apoſtle *Peter* intimates, 1. *Pet.* 2. *ver.* 9. *You are a choſen generation, a royal Prieſthood, a peculiar people, that you may ſhew forth the praiſe of him who hath called you out of darkneſs into his marvellous light*: *i, e*, out of ignorance into a great meaſure of knowledge. And it is called a *marvellous light*, 1. Becauſe it is marvellous if you compare that knowledge you ſhall have under the Goſpel, with what men had under the Law. 2. It is marvellous, becauſe men are aſtoniſhed, that they ſhould, after ſo long a night of ignorance, come to ſo great a meaſure of knowledge. 3. It is called marvellous, becauſe it is ſo contrary to that condition they were formerly in: As if a man that hath lain long in a dark dungeon, ſhould be ſuddenly called into a glorious Palace, the Palace would ſeem more glorious, becauſe it is ſo contrary to the dark Priſon: So this work of God when he *calls* you, it is *marvellous light*, becauſe it is ſo contrary to the condition you were in before

your *calling*. *Iſa.* 30. 26. *Acts* 26. 18. *He hath ſent his word to call you from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God.* 4. It is a *marvelous light*, becauſe ſuch as none but the Mediator could procure it, *Iſa.* 42. 6, 7. *I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles.* 5. It is a *marvellous light*, becauſe a light that ſhines out of darkneſs, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *God that commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs.* 6. It is a *marvellous light* becauſe it hath more force then any other light: tis called *the light of life*, John 8. 12.

Now this call from darkneſs to light hath two baanches: 1. A man ſhall have more Light, to have more acquaintance with, and more clearneſs in the myſteries of Jeſus Chriſt: And 2. more Light to know the ſinfulneſs of himſelf.

Firſt, He ſhall have more Light to know the myſteries of Jeſus Chriſt: And hence it is that *Paul* tells us, *Gal.* 1. 16. *It pleaſed God to call me by his grace, and to reveal his Son in me*; implying, that where God by his grace doth call a ſinner, he doth reveal his Son unto him. Wherefore, Beloved, if Jeſus Chriſt be not made known to your ſouls, if you have no competent meaſure of the knowledge of Chriſt; you may be under this conviction, that you are not yet called by Jeſus Chriſt. Nay further, he doth not onely call you unto this Light, to manifeſt Jeſus Chriſt to you in ſome dim way; but you ſhall have a clear light: 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *For God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts* (not in a dim, but ſhining light) *to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*: that is, you have a clear light to know God in the face of Chriſt; you cannot know God in himſelf, but in the perſon of Chriſt you ſhall have light to know him. This therefore is the firſt Branch, That God will put a light into thy ſoul, whereby thou ſhalt have a clear knowledge of the things appertaining to Jeſus Chriſt.

Again *Secondly*, This ſhall not onely reveal Chriſt to thee; but this light ſhall alſo reveal thy ſelf to thee, the ſinfulneſs of thy ſelf. It is obſervable of *Paul*, that before his calling, *he was after the law blameleſs*; he thought himſelf to be a faultleſs man; but when the word called him, then he cries out,

I ſee ſin to be exceeding ſinful: then he ſaw ſin to be ſin, and himſelf to be a vile and wretched man. And therefore, Beloved, any of you that have not this *marvellous light* in your ſouls; neither to know God, nor to know Jeſus Chriſt, nor the matters appertaining to him, nor to know the ſinfulneſs of your own hearts; take it from God, you are not effectually called: either theſe paſſages in Scripture muſt be raſed out, or elſe your calling muſt not be ſound; and therefore take heed: I would fain make my Miniſtry ſearching, that hypocrites may not lye lurking under it. You would be better Chriſtians, if you were better acquainted with all that unſoundneſs, and that wretchedneſs of heart that is in you; and therefore (I intreat you) look about you: Though I would have no godly man diſcouraged by this that is ſpoken; but that you that are not yet called, might have your hearts a little ſtaggered by what is and will be ſaid.

3. A man effectually called is caſt out of himſelf, and cleaves to, and cloſeth with Jeſus Chriſt, with more complacencie and contentment, then ever he could do in all his life before. *John 6. 45. He that hath heard and learned of the father, ſhall come unto me*; he doth not ſay, all they that hear of the father: many men do hear the word, but never cloſe in with Chriſt; but all they that have heard, and by hearing have *learnt*, and are called, come unto me, and cloſe in with me, and cleave to me, and take content and delight in me. Beloved, there are many that hear the word, yet never go out of themſelves, and never cloſe in with Chriſt: yea but all they that hear and learn, that hear and are called by hearing, they all come in to Jeſus Chriſt. Wherefore all you that in hearing cannot find your hearts in love with Chriſt; cannot find your hearts to cloſe in with Chriſt, and believe in Chriſt; you have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect your call, that your calling is not effectual. 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. The Apoſtle tells you, there were other men *counted Chriſt fooliſhneſs, but to you that are called, Chriſt is the power and wiſdom of God*: that is, you do acknowledge, and you do conceive of Jeſus Chriſt, that he hath as much power as God hath in him, and as much wiſdom as God hath in him; and you cloſe in with Chriſt for that end, when other

men think Christ to be foolish, and Christ weak: men uncalled, they have low thoughts of Christ: *but to you that are called Christ is the power and wisdom of God:* You will have high thoughts of Jesus Christ if you are effectually called.

4. That man that is effectually called, he shall be inabled by the spirit of Christ to call upon God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. *To all in Corinth called to be Saints, with all that call upon the name of the Lord.* There the Apostle joynes *called to be Saints*, with this phrase, *to call upon God*: to shew, that whoever is effectually called to be a Saint, that man shall be inabled by the Spirit of Jesus, to call upon God. *Psal.* 27. 8. *When thou saidest, Seek my face; my heart said unto thee, thy face Lord will I seek.* Hence ye read, *Acts* 9. 11. when *Ananias* doubted whether *Paul* was truly called or no, and Jesus Christ would convince *Ananias* that he was truly called, what means doth he use? *verse* 11. do not suspect him, *but arise*, saith Christ, *and go to him into the street called strait, and inquire at the house of Judas for one Saul of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth.* If he were not called, he would never go to God in such a cordial way, and humble his soul before God for his by-past failings, and beg strength for time to come, and labour to have his peace made with me, Go to him, *for behold he prayeth*: and therefore all you that have not a spirit in any measure to call upon God, and to pour forth your requests in a solemn prayer, you have just cause of jealousie to suspect your Call.

5. If you are effectually called, God hath wrought in your souls an utter detestation and loathing of all the evils that in the former part of your lives before your calling you have committed and were guilty of. *Hos.* 14. 1. *Ephraim shall say, what have I any more to do with Idols?* The interogation imports a vehement detestation of them, and indignation against them. 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. the Apostle speaks there of repentance, (the same with calling) when men come to have the work of grace in their hearts: and this is a branch of it, *that godly sorrow causeth care, and causeth fear, and causeth indignation*: that is, if any man be a repenting man, and a converted man, this conversion will cause indignation; that is, he will be even mad with himself, and angry with himself, that he should be so

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vile a wretch before converſion, as he hath been. Thus was *Paul*, he ſpeaks with indignation againſt the ſins he was guilty of before his calling: *I have been a perſecutor*, I have haled the Saints into priſon: Nay ſaith he, *I was even mad againſt the Church.* Beloved, you will count your ſins to be madneſs, and count them to be greatly aggravated, that were committed before God called you. *Anſelm* ſaid to his body, Ile tame thee, O unruly beaſt, with faſting and prayer. We read of one that bit off his tongue in indignation, that therewith he had denied Jeſus Chriſt. Another Martyr put that hand firſt into the fire, with which he had ſubſcribed a recantation: ſaying, Burn thou, O hand, that didſt ſubſcribe to that which might have made me burn both body and ſoul in hell. And therefore you that have no loathing thoughts againſt paſt deceit, and paſt drunkenneſs, and paſt ſwearing, and paſt evils, ſuſpect your calling: You that do not abhor the thoughts of your former evils, your wonted pride, and wonted covetouſneſs: if you cannot look with indignation againſt theſe, you have great cauſe to ſuſpect your call: For if God have called you, he will make you even angry with your ſelves, that ever you have been ſo vile as you have been. Hence it is, when God ſpeaks of *Iſraels* converſion, *Iſa.*2.20. tis ſaid, *they ſhall caſt away their Idols from them:* they ſhall caſt away their ſins as with indignation againſt themſelves, becauſe they have ſinned, And hence in the Propheſie of *Ezek.* 20,43. the Prophet tels them, *that for the evils they had done, they ſhould loath themſelves in their own eyes:* their indignation ſhould be ſo great againſt themſelves, that ever they ſhould be ſo vile againſt God before their call. So *David* with indignation ſaith, after he had recovered himſelfe, and brought his heart into a repentant frame, *ſo fooliſh was I and Ignorant, Pſal.* 73.22. Now Beloved, I would here appeal unto you, I will judge no man; let your own conſciences paſs ſentence upon you; But let me appeal to your ſelves: Have not many of you before theſe times been oppoſers of Religion; men walking in ungodly, lewd, and profane courſes of living? haply now you are moulded into a form of Profeſſion; now you hear the Word, ſpeak well of Miniſters; now you cry up Government, many plauſible

plauſible wayes and actions you can carry on; but what is in your hearts? Have you indignation againſt your paſt perſecution, and evils? If not, believe it, though you go far, I fear you may come ſhort of heaven: your calling is not real, if you have not indignation and wrath againſt your former ſins committed. And therefore, O what a ſad word is this to all inſenſible ſinners, that are men that never had their hearts touched with remorſe for any evil! What a ſad word is this to you that have been drunk week after week, and ſworn day after day, and deceived hour after hour, and been unclean time after time: and yet all theſe evils never touched the heart? Truly, you have great cauſe to fear, that God hath not yet effectually called you by Jeſus Chriſt.

6. The man that is effectually called, his ſpirit is brought into an obediential frame, to yield obedience to the commands of Jeſus Chriſt: if God call you by his Spirit, he will not leave you to the exorbitancies of your own wayes and will, but he will bring you to a yieldingneſs of heart to all his commands. *Rom.* 15. 6. *We have receeived grace and Apoſtleſhip for obedience to the faith among all Nations, among whom you are alſo the called of Ieſus Chriſt.* The Apoſtle did not alone receive grace for obedience; but the ſame was among them alſo: *You receive grace for the obedience of faith.* So that now, if you are the called of Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord hath this work upon you, he doth bring you to the obedience of faith; that is, he doth work in your ſouls a yielding frame to obey all the commands of Jeſus Chriſt: & therefore any of you that ſtand out with ſtoutneſs of heart againſt Jeſus Chriſt; let Chriſt ſay what he wil, you will do what you liſt; let him command what he will, you will do what you pleaſe: you that ſtand out thus with gainſaying of ſpirit againſt Jeſus Chriſt, you have great cauſe to ſuſpect your Call. Again,

7. A man effectually called by Jeſus Chriſt, he will be miſcalled and reproched by the men of the world, *John* 15. 19. *If you were of the world, the world would love his own; but becauſe you are not of the world, but I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.* Yet do not miſtake me; I do not ſay in this Concomitant, That every man that is reproched and miſ-

mis-called is a called man: but I say, A man that is truly called, will be mis-called by wicked men. Now mis-calling, or the reproches of wicked men, is a pledge of your effectual calling, if you take in these qualifications: First, if they mis-call you meerely because you are godly, and hate you because of your holiness, then it is an argument, as Jesus Christ said, *Because I have called you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Secondly, if they mis-call you when you give no occasion of offence wherefore they may justly mis-call you: If you can say with *David*, Psal. 59. *They mis-call me; but it is neither for my wickedness, nor for my sins*; if they mis-call you without any ground, then it is a probable argument of your Effectual Calling.

8. A man effectually called, he makes it his endeavour to walk worthy of his calling: 2 *Thess.* 2. 13, 14. So *Ephes.* 4. 1. *Walk worthy of the calling wherewith you are called.* And thus I have briefly gone over these Eight Particulars: I intreat you, delude not your own hearts, but bring the Word and your hearts together, and try by these Notes, whether you can evidence to your own souls, That you are effectually called by Jesus Christ, or no.

Now is this true, That with all those whom God hath effectually called, he doth take those Methods before spoken of; & he doth work these Concomitants now named? Then 1. By way of *Use*, This should be astonishment to all those that never had those Methods of God upon their souls; that never had these effects within them to accompany their Call. O (Beloved) I wish I could fasten the naile of Terror deep into their hearts that never had any of these wrought in their souls; that never loved the word, nor the Ministers of it; that never were brought by God out of a state of ignorance into a state of knowledge, that never did close in effectually with Jesus Christ; that never had indignation against the evils they did before Conversion; that never had their hearts brought into an obediential frame, to take impression of any command that God should lay upon them; how sadly should this Consideration lie upon your hearts? *Use* 1.

2. Are you effectually called? Labour to resemble him in your *Use* 2.

your converſation that hath called you. This Uſe the Apoſtle makes of this Doctrine, 1. *Pet* 1. 15. *As he that hath called you is holy, ſo be you holy*: Reſemble him that hath called you in holineſs. An excellent phraſe you have, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Shew forth* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *the praiſes of him that hath called you from darkneſs into his marvellous light.* The word is more full in the Greek; Shew forth, or manifeſt (not the *praiſes*, as we read it, but) the *vertues* or the graces of him that hath called you. If God hath called you, and Chriſt hath called you, you ſhould ſhew forth Chriſts graces in your Converſation; that is, live as Chriſt lived, and walk as Chriſt walked. *If you ſay, you have fellowſhip with Chriſt, you ought alſo to walk as he walked*, 1 John 1. 6.

Ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε, &c.

Uſe 3. 3. Do nothing that may any way blemiſh this holy calling of yours; this the Apoſtle preſſeth, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 11. *We pray alwaies for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling.* So *Epheſ.* 4. 1. *I as a priſoner of the Lord Ieſus beſeech you, that you walke worthy of the Vocation wherewith you are called.* Beloved, If you are called, take heed of any way blemiſhing your Call: All the ſcandals and failings you commit, laies a ſpot upon that holy calling of yours: though indeed there is no reaſon to blemiſh a mans Profeſſion, although ſome ſhould erre in their practice. The Apoſtle takes off this, *Gal.* 5. 8. *This perſwaſion*, ſaith *Paul, comes not from him that hath called you.* As if he ſhould ſay, many men ſeeing the *Galatians* turn Apoſtates, they may blame Religion, and blame God that called them; but ſaith the Apoſtle, do not blame them; for this perſwaſion of their failings, comes not from him that called them: your calling is not in fault, but your corruptions are in fault. Therefore it is an unjuſt accuſation, becauſe ſome men fail, to blame God, and blame profeſſion, and Religion for it.

Uſe 4. 4. If God hath effectually called you, and you evince it to your own ſouls upon the diſcovery before heard; my Laſt Uſe is this, that you would live in exalting and magnifying of the grace of God in your calling: *you are called*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 Tim. 1. 9. *according to the purpoſe of his grace, not according to your own works.* O live, live in magnifying that grace that hath called you.

And here I might preſs upon you 7 or 8 Conſiderations,

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why you ſhould live in magnifying of grace. I ſhall name them firſt in general. This exhortation ſhould much ſway with you, if you would conſider theſe three things, 1. From what you are called. 2. To what you are called; and 3. For what you are called. I ſhall put the two firſt together.

1. The conſideration of this, from what, and to what you are called, ſhould much heighten your magnifying of Gods grace: And here I ſhall name ſeven particulars.

1. A man effectually called, he is called from ignorance to knowledge, 1 *Pet.* 2.9. *You are called from darkneſs into marvellous light.* Now ſhould not this make you magnifie mercy, that you that lay in your ſins uncalled, as in a dungeon of darkneſs, now God ſhould call you into a lightſome and pleaſurable palace? thy minde was a fair-builded houſe without windowes; or if any, but woodden windowes that would let in no light: now God hath opened theſe ſhuts, and let in the Sun of righteouſneſs to ſhine upon thy ſoul; and brought thee from this dungeon of darkneſs in thy ſoul, and given thee the light of his knowledge.

2. You are called from a courſe of ſin to a courſe of holineſs: Before your calling you were the Divels Drudges, and did his work at will; the Divel (in *Pauls* language to *Timothy*) had you *Captive at his pleaſure*; but when God calls you, he takes you from under the dominion and reign of ſin; and brings you into a courſe of holineſs. 1 *Theſ.*4.7. *You are called, not unto uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs.* 2 *Pet* 1. 3. *He hath called us to glory and vertue.* Before calling thou wert the receptacle or common ſhore of all filth and uncleanneſs; when called, thou art ſwept with the beſome of ſanctification; yea beautified and adorned as a pleaſant palace for thy God to delight in. And this ſhould cauſe you much to magnifie grace, that you are brought from being the Devils drudges, to be Gods freemen; from being the Devil ſlaves, to be Gods ſervants; from being the Devils taskeman, to pay thee thy wages in hell, to be Gods workman, for which he will give thee thy reward in heaven.

3. God calls thee from bondage to liberty. In the time that thou art uncalled, thou art in bondage; 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. *they*

are the ſervants of Corruption, &c. in bondage to thy luſts, and bondage to thy Paſſion, and a ſlave to the world; thou art in bondage under the Law, under the curſe and rigour, and condemnation of it; but now Jeſus Chriſt, if he have called thee, he hath called thee to liberty. *Gal.* 5. 13. *You are called to liberty, only uſe not liberty as a Cloak to wickedneſs.* Before calling, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. you are in *Sathans ſnares*; but after calling, you are ſet at liberty, you are freed from the guilt, and freed from the bondage of your ſin.

4. You are called from a condition of eſtrangedneſs, into an intimate familiarity and fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt. Before *calling*, you are *Strangers from the life of grace*, Epheſ. 4. 18. You are *without God in the world, ſtrangers to the Commonwealth of Iſrael*, Epheſ. 2. 12. But when God *calls* you, he calls you from the condition of a ſtranger, and brings you into friendſhip and fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt. 1 *Cor.* 1. 9. *God is faithfull, by whom you are called into the fellowſhip of his Son*: You who were without Chriſt before *calling*, being *called*, you enjoy neer familiarity with his Son.

5. You are called from Sathan unto God. *Acts* 26. 18. He he hath ſent his word among you, *to bring you from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Sathan to God.* Sathan who was thy Lord, and was thy Maſter, and Ruler, thou art now from under his clutches, and brought under the dominion and ſubjection of thy God.

6. When God effectually calls thee, thou art brought from a ſtate of enmity againſt God, to a ſtate of amity and reconciliation towards him, and Jeſus Chriſt, and all the things of God. *Col.* 3. 15. *Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, for to this ye are called; and be ye thankful.* God hath called you to peace, he hath not called you to wrath. Before *Calling*, God and thy ſoul were the moſt inveterate enemies in all the world: After *Calling*, God and thou are of enemies become the greateſt friends: You are called to peace, therefore be thankful.

7. You are called from a ſtate of ſhame to a ſtate of glory. Before you are called, you are vile and ſhameful creatures in Gods ſight; when God calls you, he calls you into a condition of glo-

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ry. 1 *Pet.* 5.10. *Who hath called us to his eternall glory*: and 1. Thes. 2.12. *Since thou wast precious in my sight, and I have loved thee, thou becamest honourable*, Isa. 53. 1 Pet. 2.6. *To you that beleive, Christ is precious*: or as it is in the Greek, *he is an honour to you.* Jesus Christ, when once you are called to a believing state, he is not only precious to you, and prized of you, but he is an honour to you. This then you are to consider, that *uncalled*, you are in a shameful condition, no badge of honour lies upon you; but when once you are *called* by Christ, he becomes an honour to you. ἡ τιμὴ.

8. And lastly, (which shall be accomplished in the end) you shall be called from earth to heaven, and from the grave to glory; this shall be your call after death. Now put all these Eight together: To be called from ignorance to knowledge; from sin to grace; from bondage to liberty; from estrangement to fellowship with Jesus Christ; from a state of enmity to a state of amity and reconciliation with God and man; from shame to glory, and from earth to heaven: and should not this mightily heighten your joy, and greaten your praises in magnifying the grace of God in your hearts?

Secondly, Again, The consideration of this, As, *From what*, and *To what*; so, *For what you are called*, should greaten your praises. Now *for what* are you called? You are called meerly according to the *purpose of his own grace*; neither foreseen works, nor good education, nor grace in you, none of all these were motives in Gods breast to call you. And hence you may see it was nothing in you, because there were many things in us might move God not to call us: We have often withstood his call; we have often strangled the motions of his Spirit in our hearts: we have often carried gain-saying hearts to the wooings of the Ministers of Christ: So that it is nothing in us but meerly his own grace that conquers our unholiness, and conquers our unwillingness, and overcomes that stoutness of heart that is in us; meerly the grace and goodness of Jesus Christ. Now sum up all these together, & revolve them in your hearts, and you will see what great cause you have to live in magnifying of Jesus Christ.

SERMON IV.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

IN the proſecution of theſe words, the Doctrine I drew from the firſt particular duty enjoyned, was this;

That Chriſtians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſouls, that they are effectually called by Ieſus Chriſt.

In the handling of which, I have gone over ſeveral particulars: I now come to lay down ſome Propoſitions or Concluſions about *Effectual Calling*, and I ſhall name *twenty* in all.

Firſt, Ten ſad Concluſions to all thoſe men who are not effectually called.

Secondly, Ten conſolatory concluſions to all thoſe men that are effectually called by Jeſus Chriſt; and mixing concluſions procuring terror to the wicked, and ſuch as procure comfort to the godly; one tempered with the other may be good to both. I begin with the firſt.

1. The firſt ſad Concluſion I ſhall lay down is this: That there are many men in the world, that are called outwardly by the word unto a profeſſion of Chriſt, that are not called effectually by the ſpirit to a poſſeſſion of Chriſt. My meaning is this: There are many men have the word of God working much upon them, to the changing of their lives, altering their courſe, and new moulding of them into an external profeſſion, that yet notwithſtanding all this never had ſaving grace wrought upon their hearts, which is effectual calling: *Many are called, but few are choſen*, ſaith Chriſt, *Matt.* 20. 16. And th is

this is a dreadful Concluſion to all you that are profeſſors, that have not a ſaving work upon your hearts: to you that flock unto the miniſtry of the word, yet are not called thereby.

2. That they who are called outwardly by the preaching of the word to a profeſſion of Chriſt, and yet not called inwardly by the ſpirit, they ſhall endure greater damnation, and greater torments in hell, then thoſe that never heard a word of Jeſus Chriſt. *Mat.* 8. 12. *Many ſhall come*, ſaith Chriſt, *from the Eaſt and from the Weſt, and ſhall ſit down with Abraham, Iſaac, and Iacob, in the Kingdome of Heaven*: and what then? *but the children of the Kingdome ſhall be caſt out into utter darkneſs, where ſhall be weeping and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth.* Now, who are meant here by the children of the kingdom? not thoſe that have heaven prepared for them; but the profeſſing Jews, who are called the children of the kingdome, becauſe they enjoyed a greater, and clearer, and fuller meaſure of the things of God, which ſhewed them the way to the kingdome of heaven, then other men did. And when Chriſt calls them the Children of the kingdome, he calls the heathen the children of the world. Now, many of the children of the kingdom ſhal be caſt into utter darkneſs: If there be any more diſmal place then other, it ſhall be for the children of the kingdom, thoſe that have been as it were nurſed up under Gods elbow by ordinances; the children of the kingdome, they ſhall have a more diſmal portion, and diſmal room in hell then other men ſhall have, that never enjoyed the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt. And O what a ſad word is this to you that live where ordinances do moſt abound, that you may be called the children of the kingdome, and yet you to be thruſt into utter darkneſs!

3. That there are many men, who are onely called outwardly into a bare profeſſion, that do harbour and nouriſh perſwaſions in their own hearts, that they are effectually called by Jeſus Chriſt; when they never had any ſaving work of grace upon their hearts. This I ſpake of ſome weeks ago, from *Iohn* 8. 41. The Jews had ſtrong perſwaſions, they had *Abraham* for their father: and when Chriſt beats them off from that, they went higher and ſaid, we have God to our Father: and yet *ver.* 44. Chriſt tells them, *they were of their Father the Devil.*

Devil. And Beloved, you may alſo be deceived, in harbouring ſtrong perſwaſions that you are called effectually, when you are onely called outwardly.

4. That they are conceited in the opinion of their own goodneſs, without ſeeing their want and neceſſity of Jeſus Chriſt, are of all ſorts of people of the world moſt unlikely to be effectually called by Jeſus Chriſt. This I urge from *Mat.* 9. 13. *I came not*, ſaith Chriſt, *to call the righteous*, &c. Mark, who are they? that is, Chriſt came not to call the Phariſees, who were righteous in their own eyes, and whohad a ſelf-conceitedneſs that things went well with them, and ſaw no need of a Mediator, and Interceſſor, and Redeemer: *I came not to call the righteous:* Jeſus Chriſt excludes that ſort of men from being called by him: men that are ſelf-opinionated, and have a conceit of their own goodneſs, without any want of Jeſus Chriſt. Wherefore all you that think you have a ſtrong faith towards God ever ſince you were born, that think you live honeſtly among your neighbours, pay every man his due, and therefore ſee no need of Chriſt all your dayes; the Lord ſhew you mercy, you are more unlikely to be called then any men in the world. *Matth.* 21. 31. There is a parable *of a man that had two ſons, he bid both work in the vineyard; one ſon ſaid he would not work*; he was obſtinate: *the other ſon ſaid he would work, but did not*, and ſo was worſe then his word. Now theſe two ſons, they are the emblem of two ſorts of men within the pale of the Church; ſome are profane and obſtinate men, and they anſwer as the firſt ſon, and ſay, they will not work: the ſecond are profeſſing men, men that make a good profeſſion, but do not anſwer their profeſſion in their practice. Now mark; *Whether of theſe twain will the father accept? and they ſaid unto him, the firſt*, the moſt obſtinate, that ſaid, he would not go, but went. *Verily*, ſaith Chriſt, *ſo I ſay unto you, Publicans and Harlots ſhall go into heaven before you.* Mark, how Chriſt applies the parable from their own mouths; you that are Phariſees, that are righteous and honeſt in your own eyes, I will ſooner call whores, and harlots, and the worſt of men, then I will call you. *Publicans and Harlots*; Publicans, they were the worſt ſort of men that were, they were ſitting at the receipt of

of cuſtome, their calling expoſing them to a great deal of extortion and briberie: yet theſe men ſhould go to heaven before others that made a glorious profeſſion of Jeſus Chriſt. Again,

5. A fifth ſad Concluſion is this, that when others are effectually called before your faces, and yet you remain uncalled, this ſhould greatly aggravate your ſin and condemnation; when (I ſay) you ſhall ſee others that live (haply) in the ſame houſe with you, that heare in the ſame congregation, that ſit in the ſame ſeat with you; when you ſhall heare theſe effectually called, and you remain uncalled; this ſhall greatly increaſe your ſin and damnation. *Matt.* 21.32. *Iohn came to you in the way of righteouſneſs, and you believed him not*; (that is, they were not called by the Miniſtry) what then? *but the Publicans and Harlots believed*: what then? *and you, when you had ſeen it, repented not afterwards that you might believe*: Mark how Chriſt argues; he urges that thoſe men that heard the ſame Sermons that the other men did hear, they were converted; ſaith he, you ſee whores and harlots converted, (alluding to *Mary Magdalen*, and others) you ſee theſe, and yet you repent not, and yet you believe not: now you ſee one, then another; and yet when you ſee this, you repent not that you might believe. Beloved, This is a ſad concluſion to you that ſhall ſee others converted, when you that haply lie in the ſame bed, ſit at the ſame board, and hear the ſame Sermons in the ſame Congregation; yet they ſhall be converted and called, and you not: this will greatly increaſe your ſin and condemnation.

6. That whoever God intends effectually to call, it is Gods ordinary way to call them by the miniſtry of his word. 2 *Theſ.* 2.13,14. Its ſaid there, that they were *called through the Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, to obtain eternal glory by Ieſus Chriſt*: they were called by belief of the truth, that is, by believing the word preacht, and loving the word preacht; *faith comes by hearing*: faith is the firſt grace of a Chriſtians Call, and that comes by hearing, *Rom.* 10.17. ſo *Acts* 26. 17, 18. When Chriſt would call and convert the Gentiles, he doth it not immediately, but he uſeth the Miniſtry of *Paul*: *Go thou, teach the Gentiles, and bring them from darkneſs to light, and from the*

the power of Satan unto God. God doth it ſtill by the preaching of his word. Now this is a ſad word to three ſorts of men. Firſt, it is a ſad word to them that never ſat under the powerful preaching of the word, they are out of Gods ordinary way of being ſaved.

2. It is a ſad word to thoſe that may enjoy the word, and yet ſlight it; they alſo are not likely to be called.

3. Its a ſad word to thoſe that leave the ordinary way of Gods calling by the preaching of the word, and truſt to raptures,, revelations, inſpirations, and extraordinary means for God to call them by: alas, they alſo are out of Gods ordinary way of calling; for God ordinarily takes this way to call a ſoul by the preaching of his word. *Luke* 15. 22. When the Prodigal was effectually called home to his father, his father did not preſently comfort him himſelf, but he ſends his ſervants, and ſaid, *Go, take the beſt robe, and put it upon my Sonne*; This ſon is a ſinner, the father is God Almighty, the ſervants are the miniſters: now God doth not his work by himſelf, but he leaves it to his Miniſters; and they ſhall put on the ring and the garment; they ſhall be the inſtruments by the Miniſtry of the word to work grace in the heart; hence it is that 1 *Cor.* 1. 12. ſome are blamed that ſhould ſay, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollo, and I of Chriſt*; Why, are men blamed for ſaying they are for Chriſt? Is that blame-worthy, to cry up Chriſt? No: the fault is not ſimply in advancing Chriſt, but the fault was this, ſo to cry up Chriſt, as to cry down duties, and cry down the uſe of Miniſters, and the uſe of Ordinances, and therein they were to blame; becauſe Chriſt would not immediately by revelations and raptures call any, but leaves the converſion and call of a ſinner, to the ordinary way of preaching the word: and therefore a ſad word it is to all out of Gods way of calling, that either have not the word, or if they have it, never care to enjoy it.

7. That if men continue long under the enjoyment of the word, and are not effectually called by it, they are likely never to be called. I would commend to you that place to prove this, in *Luke* 13. 6, 7. where Chriſt tels you *of a fig-tree, he ſtayed three years looking for fruit, and he found none; the husband-*

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man prayed to ſpare it one year longer, and if it did not bear fruit then, he ſhould cut it down, and caſt it into the fire. Now, this Fig-tree were the profeſſing Jewes, who lay ſome competent time under the Miniſtry of Chriſt and of his Apoſtles; and this Fig-tree, if it were ſpared but one year, and brought not forth fruit, then it ſhould be cut down: and Chriſt did ſo; it ſeems he curſt it, and ſaid, *never fruit grow more upon this tree.* Now, you would ask what the meaning of all this is? Why, Beloved, a fig-tree, if it beareth not fruit within four years after it is planted, it is likely never to bring forth fruit: And here the Parable comes home thus far, that if after ſome competency of time, in which in all likelihood men may have ſome ſparks wrought in them by the miniſtry of the word; if after all this they are not converted, the curſe of the fig-tree is like to fal upon that mans heart; never let the word do that man good more, and never let grace grow in that mans heart more; *let never fruit grow more upon that tree*: this the Parable holds forth, that if you live under the enjoyment of the word long and are not converted, it is an argument you ſhall not be called. And this is a heart-cutting conſideration to all ancient men, that have out-lived many Miniſters, and have ſeen their Miniſters laid in the grave; their Miniſters have ſpent their ſtrength, and waſted their lungs in preaching to them, and yet they are as profane as ever, and as looſe as ever, and as regardleſs of God and grace as ever; truely, you are in a very ſad caſe if it be thus with you, you are likely never to be called by Jeſus Chriſt.

8. That God in the diſpenſations of his grace, doth not ordinarily let effectual calling run to the richer ſort of men in the world; but rather to the pooreſt ſorts and ranks of men that are. I remember that *Auſtin* in one of his books hath this ſaying, Unlearned men they ſnatch away heaven from us that are great Scholars: and truly, as it was in his time, ſo it is now: Men that are great Scholars, that underſtand Scripture, know Languages, they are turned into hel, when unlearned and poor men, they get heaven. *God hath choſen the poor of this world to be rich in faith.* In all the diſpenſations of his grace (though he cals ſome rich men, it is true, to car-

Surgunt indocti & rapiunt cœlum, & nos cum doctrinis noſtris detrudimur in Gehennam.

rie on the work, and countenance his people; yet Gods effectuall calling doth not ſo commonly come among rich men, as the poor of the world: *the poor*, ſaith Chriſt, *receive the Goſpel*; the Learned Scribes, and Doctors among the Jewes, and the rich Phariſees, they did all ſpurn at Jeſus Chriſt, when the poor and ignorant people that knew not the Law, they followed him. 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. *Not many wiſe, not many noble, not many mighty are called; but God hath choſen the poor things of this world, and things that are deſpiſed, yea and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are.* Here you ſee plainly this concluſion proved, that Gods effectual calling doth not ordinarily and commonly run among the greater ſort of men in the world, but it runs among the poorer ſort of men, they ordinarly give beſt entertainment to the Goſpel. And the reaſon of this is, 1. To magnifie the riches of his grace: if Chriſt ſhould call rich men onely and chiefly, many would think, it was onely mens riches and mens honour did move Chriſt to call them: Now, Chriſt to vindicate and magnifie his grace, he will call poor deſpicable wretches, that one would think there ſhould be nothing in the eye of reaſon or ſenſe, why God ſhould caſt an eye of favour upon them.

2. To magnifie and manifeſt his power, that he will preſerve a company of poor contemptible people, among ſo many enemies, ſo potent, and ſo wealthy, that they ſhall never be able to overthrow them.

3. Becauſe rich men lie under more temptations againſt effectual calling, then poor men do. Rich men think, ſhould I be called to be a Profeſſor, I may loſe my riches, endanger my eſtate, and eclipſe my honour; and theſe are great temptations to rich men to hinder their calling. Therefore you read *Mark* 10. 22. of the young man, that when Chriſt called him, it is ſaid, *he went away ſorrowful, for he had great poſſeſſions*; and would not follow Chriſt, who had not a houſe wherein to put his head. Many men for fear of loſing their eſtates, they lie under this ſore temptation, to hinder them from being called: And then alſo for their honour; men may think they ſhall eclipſe their honour, ſhould they profeſſe a courſe of Religi-

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on, *Gal.* 2. 2. *I preacht publickly among the ordinary ſort*, ſaith *Paul*, *but I* preacht *privately to men of reputation, leſt I ſhould run in vain.* As much as if he ſhould ſay, men of qualitie and of repute, they would not own Chriſt publickly, they were afraid they ſhould loſe their honour and credit; therefore *Paul* was enforced to indulge them ſo far, as to preach privately to them: hence *Nicodemus* a great man came to Jeſus by night.

9. If you are onely externally called to a profeſſion of Chriſt, and not called internally to a profeſſion of him, at one time or other before you die, God will diſcover the hypocriſie of your hearts, and the unſoundneſs of your call. There are many men who are now called; a man cannot diſcerne whether they be effectually called or no; but in likelihood before you die, you will diſcover ſomewhat or other that may give juſt ground of ſuſpicion you are not ſavingly called, either by falling into ſome errour in judgment, or running into ſome ſcandalous ſin, or the like.

Laſtly, if God hath not, or intends not effectually to call thee, thou mayeſt take this for an undeniable truth, God neither intends to juſtifie thee, nor to ſave thee: *Whom he calls, them he juſtifies*, and none elſe; *and whom he juſtifies, them he glorifies*, and none elſe: So that Juſtification and Glorification depend upon calling, *Rom.* 8. 30. And thus I have done with theſe ten ſad concluſions.

I ſhall now change my diſcourſe, and turne my ſpeech to a ſecond ſort of men, and to them I ſhall lay down ten conſolatory concluſions, for the comfort of you that are the called of Jeſus Chriſt. And here, before I lay theſe down, I ſhall firſt ſhew you what need there is that Miniſters ſhould preach comfortably to you that are effectually called. Becauſe firſt, after you are called effectually, you are more expoſed to meet with perſecutions from men. Secondly, Temptations from the Devil. Thirdly, The ſtronger ſtruglings of temptations from within, then ever you were before; therefore you had need of comfort.

1. I ſay, After calling you are more expoſed to meet with perſecutions from men then ever you were before. *Heb.* 10. 32,

33. *Call to remembrance the former dayes, in which after you were illuminated, you endured a sore fight of affliction, partly by being reproched, and made a gazing-stock, &c.* They endured nothing before, but after they were enlightned, they endured a great fight of Affliction: had not you therefore need of comfort?

2. After calling, you are more exposed to temptations from the Devil, then ever you were before. The Devil, when he finds all things at peace, he lets men alone; but when he finds a man coming out of his clutches to be called, then Satan troubles and assaults him. 1 *Pet.* 5. 8, 10. *Your Adversary the Devil goes about like a roring lion, seeking whom he may devoure.* These were they that *the God of grace hath called to eternal glory:* Yet these were they that the Devil rageth so against. Had not you therefore need of comfort, because you are exposed to more temptations from the Devil?

And 3. You are to meet with more strong and vigorous workings of inward corruptions in your own hearts; as *Paul* before his calling was not troubled with his corruptions, sin never troubled him, the powerful and vigorous workings of his lusts never wearied him; *but when the command came, then sin revived*: When the power of the word came with Authority upon his conscience, then he saw sin to revive and get strength upon him. Beloved, I would appeal to any of you whom God hath called to grace and glory, whether before you were called, you ever found sin so strong as after, and ever found the workings of your inward corruptions so violent as after? and therefore upon these three grounds, you have need that comfort should be preached unto you.

I now pass to the Conclusions, which I shall lay down for the comfort of all them that are effectually called.

1. That Jesus Christ doth effectually call a poor sinner, before that sinner doth look after Jesus Christ. Should God entail heaven upon this condition, that you that had been first in the transgression, should be first in seeking reconciliation, we should never have the difference ended betwixt God and us; but behold, here is mercy, and here is a ground of comfort, that though we are the first in the transgression, Christ is the

the firſt in ſuing out Reconciliation: Jeſus Chriſt doth effectually call poor ſinners, before they either call or look after Jeſus Chriſt at all. *Iſa.* 65. 1. *I am ſought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that ſought me not; I ſaid, Behold me, Behold me, to a Nation that was not called by my name.* Here you ſee, Jeſus Chriſt goeth out firſt to call thee, before thou goeſt out to call him. And O what comfort is this? Chriſt doth not ſtay till thou look after a Chriſt, but Chriſt caſts an eye upon thee before thou look after him. We read of *Matthew* the Publican, that while he was looking after his money at the receipt of cuſtome, at that time Jeſus Chriſt was looking after his ſoul. We read of the Diſciples of Chriſt, whilſt they were mending their nets, and looking after the fiſh, Jeſus Chriſt takes this occaſion with the hook of the Goſpel to catch them. We read of *Paul*, that whilſt he was breathing out perſecution againſt the Church of God, and raging with malice againſt the Saints of God, at that time he was even called to be a Saint: So that this is very comfortable. God doth firſt look after a ſinner in his effectual calling, before a ſinner looks out after Chriſt. God doth firſt look after thee, enlightning thee by a Sermon, and ſeizing upon thy conſcience by a command, before thou look after him.

2. That Jeſus Chriſt hath effectually called thee, when he hath left many thouſands in the world, of better parts, and better diſpoſitions, more natural good, and leſſe evil in them then thou haſt in thy ſelfe; and yet he hath rejected them and called thee. Jeſus Chriſt hath many times rejected a patient heathen, when he hath called thee, who art of a rigid and paſſionate diſpoſition: Jeſus Chriſt hath left many a curious wit, and pregnant Scholar, and many of ſingular parts, that had they grace to manage them, they might bring God much glory; and it may be he hath called thee, a poor ignorant ſottiſh creature. Jeſus Chriſt (it may be) hath rejected many that have had leſs ſin then thou haſt in thee. Jeſus Chriſt did reject many an honeſt heathen, when he would call *Mary Magdalen*, that had ſeven Devils in her: Chriſt rejected *Simon Magus*, and rejected *Agrippa*, a half turned Chriſtian, and rejected *Herod*, who heard *Iohn Baptiſt* gladly,

gladly; and rejected *Felix* that trembled at a Sermon, and rejected *Ahab*, that humbled his ſoul before God; when it may be he hath called thee, that never hadſt ſuch workings in thy heart as theſe men had: And O what ground of comfort is here!

3. God in calling thy ſoul, and bringing thee into a ſtate of grace, he doth it freely for his own name ſake; when there was nothing in thee to move him to call thee; when there was much in thee to provoke him never to call thee, yet his own grace compelled him, and his own mercy engaged him to call thee. 1 *Tim.* 2. 9. *We are called according to the purpoſe of his own grace, not according to our own works.*

4. That they who are moſt ſenſible of their own vileneſs, and ſee the moſt want and neceſſity of Jeſus Chriſt, they of all people are moſt likely to be called by him. When Chriſt rejects civil honeſt men, and ſelf-conceited men, and morally good men, and they are no way likely to be called; yet thoſe men that are ſenſible of their wickedneſs, and ſee their want of Jeſus Chriſt, they are of all Men moſt likely to be called. *Matth.* 9. 13. *I came not to call the righteous*; but whom? *but ſinners to repentance.* All men are ſinners, but he means ſuch as ſee their ſin, and ſee their need of Chriſt to pardon and ſubdue ſin in them, for ſo the words import: *The whole need not a Phyſician, but they that are ſick*: They that are ſick of ſinne, and ſee their infirmities, they are moſt likely to be called by Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore this is moſt comfortable to you, all you that are drooping Chriſtians, that hang down your heads under the ſenſe of ſin, that ſee ſin to be exceeding ſinfull; this is the end for which Chriſt came into the world, to call you to glory.

5. That a man may be elected by God from all eternity, and yet he may live a long time in a courſe of ſin, before he call him, and yet before he dyes he ſhall be called. *Iohn* 10. 16. *I lay down my life for my ſheep; and other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold, them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall heare my voice, and there ſhall be one fold under one ſhepherd, &c.* The meaning is this; Chriſt told them his converted ones were his ſheep; and theſe are not all, but I have others that

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are not converted, yet I will convert them, and bring them to the ſame fold alſo. So that Chriſt hath his ſheep among them that are not yet converted and called: and though many times you may go a long time in a courſe of ſin, yet before you die, you ſhall be effectually called, and brought home to the ſheepfold of Jeſus Chriſt.

6. A man may be effectually called, when in his own apprehenſion he cannot finde any real and ſound evidence of his vocation. This that phraſe in *Peter* imports, 2 *Pet.* 1.11. *Who ſo doth not theſe things, is blind and cannot ſee afar off.* It is ſpoken of a godly man, of a man that hath his election ſure, but doth not add grace to grace to make his calling ſure, that man is purblind and cannot ſee afar off, that is, cannot ſee as far as heaven, that his name is written there; cannot have clear and ſtrong comfort of his belonging to God. Many a godly man may be effectually called, and yet that man a purblind man, not able to behold as with open face the evidence of his effectual calling.

7. A man may have a grounded aſſurance that he is effectually called, and yet neither know the time when, nor the manner how, nor the inſtrument by whom he was called. And this is a very comfortable concluſion. There are ſome that preſs converſion ſo high, that if a man cannot tel the time when, or the manner how, or the Sermon by which he was called, they ſay he is not yet converted; this is too rigid a Doctrine, and the Scripture makes more for the confirmation of this, that a man may have a grounded aſſurance of his effectual calling, when he neither knows the time, nor the manner, nor the inſtrument by which he was called. *Marke* 4. 24. *And he ſaid, ſo is the Kingdome of God, as if a man ſhould caſt ſeed into the ground, and ſhould ſleep, and riſe night and day, and the ſeed ſhould ſpring up and grow he knows not how.* The ſeed here ſown is the work of grace, *for ſo is the Kingdome of God*, ſaith Chriſt: and here this ſeed ſprings up, the man cannot tel haply the day he ſowed it, nor how he ſcattered it, yet this ſeed ſprings up he knows not how. So a man may have the ſeed of grace ſown in his heart, which is effectual calling, and yet it grows up he knows not how, nor when he was called.

So

So *John* 9. (I only allude to it) 19, 20. It is spoken there of the man that was healed by Jesus Christ; the blind Son, that had his eyes opened by Jesus Christ: What say his Parents? *We know this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now seeth we know not, nor who opened his eyes.* Beloved, So I may say of a poor sinner; a poor sinner is like this blind son, we know we are born blind, neither knowing God nor our selves. We know, if we are converted, we now see, but how this was done, or by whom this was done, man cannot so exactly determine.

But now, this conclusion doth not hold true in all causes; If a man have been a profane liver; then it is impossible in an ordinary way, that that man should be effectually called, but he must know the time when he is called: but for others that from their childhood have been brought up in a godly family, and from their childhood to their dying day, did never break out into any scandalous sin, these men cannot give an account either when, or by whom they were called, and yet their calling may be effectual: & therefore that is too rigid a Doctrine to presse such high qualifications before conversion; for God hath different wayes and degrees of working, though all are not obvious to our eye.

8. That they who are called by Christ, they shall be kept by Christ, that they do not fall from their Call, but be brought to the state of glory; and that is another comfortable conclusion: you are not called by Christ, and so left to your selves and the wide world, as *Adam* was. *Adam* was called by God to a state of blessedness: but he was left to stand by his own strength, but you are not so: You are not onely called by Christ, but you are kept by Christ, that you shall not fall from grace, being once called to it. *Iude* verse 1. *Iude the servant of Christ, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ and called.* Here then is you comfort, that you are not called by Christ, and left to your selves: but you are preserved by Christ, and called and kept in a state of grace, till you shall come to glory. So 1 *Thes.* 5. 24. *Faithfull is he that called you, who also will do it:* that is, bring you to that glory which you are called unto.

9. When

9. When Christ hath an intent to call a poor sinner, neither their Poverty, nor their impiety shall hinder the call of Jesus Christ: Not your povertie; *God hath chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heires of a kingdome, Iam.* 2. Not your impiety; poor Christians think, Oh, I am so vile, and so sinful, and profane, that I fear Christ will not call me: Why this shall not hinder; *Mary Magdalen*, a Harlot possessed with seven Devils, yet called: *Manasseh* a blood-sucker, that made the streets of Jerusalem run down with blood, yet called: *Paul* a persecutor, a blasphemer, a man mad with rage against the Church of God, *yet he obtained mercy*: and why? *that he might be an example to them that after should be called.* So that here is your comfort, when Jesus Christ hath an intent to call you, neither your Poverty, nor your Impiety shall withstand his call, nor turn the thoughts of his mercy from you.

10. That though no man can pry into the decrees of God about Election and Reprobation, yet if you can make good your Effectual Vocation, you may be sure of your election and of your glorification. Though no man, I say, can enter into the bosome of God to know his secret decrees; yet if you can find upon good and Scripture grounds, that you are effectually called, you may be sure you are eternally elected, and shall hereafter live in glory, *Rom.* 8. 28. *Whom he predestinates, them he calls, whom he calls, them he justifies, and whom he justifies, them he will glorifie.* And therefore comfort your hearts in these consolatory Conclusions about effectual calling.

SERMON V.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.

THe Doctrine yet I am upon in the prosecution of these words, is this, *That Christians should put forth a great*

deal of diligence to make this sure to their souls, that they are effectually called by Iesus Christ. In the managing of which, I laid down the last Lords day twenty Propositions; ten in relation to wicked men not called, and ten Conclusions for the comfort of them that are effectually called by Jesus Christ. I am now to proceed in the dispatch of six cases of conscience, which I shall handle about effectual calling. Three of which concern men not effectually called, and three touching Believers, who are called by Christ to grace here, and to hopes of glory in the world to come.

The three first cases touching wicked men are these:

First, Whether a wicked man be able to resist his own call?

Secondly, What temptations doth the Devil suggest, to keep a wicked man from entertaining and embracing the call of Jesus Christ?

Thirdly, What delusions doth the Devil use to deceive Hypocrites, to make them presumptuously believe that they are effectually called, when they are not?

There are three cases more touching godly men:

First, Whether may a man that is effectually called, be any way assured that he is so?

Secondly, If a man may be assured, then what is the reason many a godly man is not assured of his effectual calling?

And then Thirdly, How may he come to get the assurance of his effectual calling? I begin with the first, about wicked men that are not called; and the case is this.

First, Whether may a wicked man, a man as yet not called, be able to resist and keep off his own call?

And that you may understand the answer hereto, I must lay down this distinction; that there is a twofold calling of Christ:

A Significative calling, and an Operative calling.

First, a Significative calling, which is such a calling whereby Christ in the Ministry of the word, signifies and declares what he would have men to do: Now this kind of call wicked men may resist; this call, I say, and this revealed will of God, in declaring what grace he would have men act, and what sin he would have men forbear: Therefore we read, *Acts* 7. 5. *You stiff-*

stiff-necked people, and uncircumcised in heart and eares, you have alwaies resisted the Holy Ghost; meaning the Preaching of the word, by the Ministry of his Apostles. So *Prov.* 1.24. *I have called, and ye have refused, &c.*

But then secondly, There is an Operative calling, and that is such a call, whereby God doth not onely signifie to a man what he must do, but with the signification of his Will, gives a man a power to do what he calls him to do, accompanying the word with his Spirit, making the heart stoop and yield to Jesus Christ.

Now this call no man can resist; Grace is irresistible; and this effectual calling by the operation of the Spirit a man cannot resist. All the gain-sayings of the heart, and all the stoutnes of the will it must stoop, and must be brought under subjection to Jesus Christ, *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father hath given me*, saith Christ, *shall come unto me*. They shall not be able to withstand Jesus Christ, but they shall come in unto him. So *Isa.* 55. 10. *As the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and returns not thither again, but waters the earth, to make it bring forth: so shall my word be that goes out of my mouth, it shall not return in vain, but shall accomplish that which I intended, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.* As all the world cannot hinder the rain from coming down on the earth, no more can any man in the world, if God hath an intent to convert and call him, hinder the benefit of the word from redounding upon his soul.

Now the answering of this case thus briefly, will admit of a double Use.

First, an Use of Condemnation to wicked men, that have often resisted the significative call of Jesus Christ. When Christ hath signified, this is my will, I would have you leave these courses, and I would have you walk in these wayes; Christ signifies his will in the Ministry of the Gospel; yet let Christ signifie what he will, you will do what you list; this is for thy great condemnation. *Use* 1.

Secondly, The answering this *Quaere*, is for consolation to elect men, who are not yet converted. Dost thou belong to Gods Election? Why, before thou art converted, thou hast a *Use* 2.

stubborn will, thou hast a gainsaying heart, thou hast a stout spirit against God, thy heart is as hard as an Adamant, as hard as the Rocks; yet here is thy comfort, all the gain-sayings of thy spirit, and all the stubbornness of thy will, it shall not be able to keep off converting mercy, and shall not be able to keep off calling grace from thee: When God hath an intent to call thee, he will come with Power by his call, and make thee do what he commands thee, and make thee embrace what he calls thee to. Did not Jesus Christ use an operative call, as well as a significative call, no man in the world would ever be called. And this is the reason, that in hearing the same Sermon, and following the same Preacher, one man is converted, the other is not; The reason is this, The call of the Ministry is onely a significative call of a Reprobate; onely signifying what God would have him to do: But there is no power conveyed with the invitation to make the man able to do what Christ cals him to; and therefore one is called, and the other is not. Thus much in Answer to the first case.

2 Case. Secondly, What temptations doth the Devil suggest to men who are uncalled, that they should not give entertainment to, or embrace the call of Jesus Christ unto grace and glory? And in answer to this, I shall lay down onely four suggestions of the Devil, wherewith he intangles a man, that he should not yield to the call of Jesus Christ. And as I lay them down, I shall labour to take them away. As

1. The first temptation the Devil will suggest, is to you that are young men; and to you he will suggest, that you are yet too young to embrace the call of Jesus Christ: it will be time enough hereafter, and you may do it soon enough hereafter; you are too young now to be abridged of your pleasure, and to mortifie your lusts, and to betake your selves unto so serious a course as Christ cals you to; and by this temptation, the Devil prevails with young men more especially. And I remember *Austine* saith, that this temptation of the Devil made him keep off for seven years together, from embracing the call of Jesus Christ; the Devil would still tell him in his heart, thou art too young to leave thy Drunkenness, and too young to leave thy Harlots; till at last he cryed out, How long shall I say

say it is too soon? Why may I not repent to day? This temptation, I say, it hath fastened upon many before you, that they were too young to come in to Jesus Christ; and to this end, the Devil will suggest to you that old and false Proverb, *A young Saint and an old Devil:* Whereas indeed, if you are young Devils, you will be old *Beelzebubs*. And therefore this being a suggestion prevailing with many hearts, I shall lay down six considerations, to take off this temptation, that it may not prevail with you.

First, If the Devil tempt you that you are too young to hearken to Christs call, consider, That the Devil cannot give you a Lease of your lives; if the Devil could give you a Lease of your lives, and tell you, you should live till old age, you might then with more safety hearken to his temptation; but your lives are not at the Devils disposal: God is the Author of your life; the issues of life and death are in his hands; you may die in youth uncalled, you may be damned as well as dead. You may be as these men, *Iob* 36. 14. *that shall die in their youth, and their lives shall be among the unclean.* And therefore though the Devil tempt you, that you are too young, seeing he cannot assure you of your lives, you have no reason to hearken to his temptation.

Secondly, Suppose the Devil could assure you, you should live till old age; yet take this consideration, that in putting off your calling, and the work of conversion from your youth, this may so provoke God, that he may harden your hearts in your old daies, that you shall have no heart to think of, and embrace the call and invitation of Jesus Christ. *Ier.* 22. 21. *I spake to thee in thy prosperity, but thou wouldst not hear, and this hath been thy manner from thy youth; Thou wouldst not obey my voice.* God spake, but they would not hear, and it was from their youth that they did thus, therefore God would never speak more: God hardened their hearts, that they should never receive or embrace the call of Jesus Christ. So *Isa.* 6. 9, 10. Seeing the Jews from their youth were obstinate against the word of God, *Go,* (saith God) *make their ears heavy, and their hearts fat, and their eyes blind, that they should not be called, and converted, and I should save them.* Let this

this therefore be a second consideration, that the putting off your call till your old age, may so provoke God, as never to give you hearts to embrace his call.

Thirdly, Suppose all this, that you could have a Lease of your lives, and you could be assured, that when you come to old age, your hearts should not be hardened; yet consider this, that the more sinful and evil the dayes of your youth have been, the more disquietness of mind, and horror of conscience will this breed in you when you are old, though you shall be called and converted by Jesus Christ, *Iob* 13. 24, 25, 26. *Thou hidest thy face, thou holdest me as thy Enemy. Thou dost drive me as a leaf to and fro, and thou dost pursue me like dry stubble.* Now why doth *Iob* complain thus? Mark the next words, *For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth. Iob*, when he was a young man, it seems, he was a wicked man, and had many sins in his youth, and this in his old age made him cry out, and say, that God took him for his Enemy, and that God brake him like a leafe driven with the wind. O beloved, the sins of your youth, though you should be *Iobs*, converted, yet they will bring great disquietness, and great horror, when you come to age; the lusts of youth, and the vanities of youth, and the sensual pleasures of your youthful daies, they will lay a foundation of sorrow, when you come to gray hairs, to be near your graves; so *Iob* 20. 11. And therefore, put the case you should repent, and should be called when you are old, you have no cause to put off the call of Jesus Christ, seeing sins of youth will fill you with horror and disquietness of mind. Hence it is, that *David*, after he was called by the power of the word, cries out, *Psal.* 25. *Lord, remember not the sins of my youth*; that gravelled and galled his conscience, the sins of his youth before his call. It is the speech of an Author, that to look on the pleasurable vanities and contents of youth, this will become an heavy burden, and bitter vexation to old age. Beloved, the more evil you run out into in your youthful daies, the greater and deeper foundation of disquietness and sorrow you lay in your soule in your latter daies, though you should be called by Jesus Christ.

Quæ fuerunt inania juventutis gaudia, hæc sunt acerba senectutis gravamina.

4. It

4 If the Devil suggest, that you are too young to embrace the invitation of Christ: consider, that Jesus Christ will take it most kindly at your hands, if while ye are young you will give entertainment to his call, *Ier.* 2. 2. *I remember thee*, saith the Lord, *and the kindness of thy youth, that thou wouldst follow me in the Wilderness, in a land that was not sown.* Mark how the Lord speaks, and how kindly he takes it, that they would in their youth follow God; the Lord will remember it, and take it acceptably from you, if while you are young, while the Marrow is in your bones, and strength in your joynts, you will embrace the wayes of Jesus Christ. It is an observation that some have, concerning the Beloved Disciple *Iohn*, John 20. *He is called the Disciple whom Christ loved, and that leaned upon his breast*; of all the other eleven Disciples, Christ did love *Iohn* above the rest; and Divines give this reason of it, *Iohn* was the youngest of all the Disciples; he was converted and called by Christ, when he was a young man; and Christ seeing a young man follow him, took this very kindly at his hands, and cals him his beloved Disciple. As you that are Parents, you let your little Children sit in your lap, when your great ones shall not; so *Iohn*, he being a young man, Christ would let him leam upon his breast, and lie in his bosome, expressing his kindness to him.

Now, O how this should beat off this temptation, that you are too young to follow Christ, because Christ takes it so kindly at your hands, if you imbrace this call in time? nay, Christ doth take it so kindly, that he doth love bare Morality and Civility in young men; and therefore it is said in *Matthew*, when Christ saw the young man, and he told him, *I have observed these things from my youth, Christ looked upon him, and loved him*: Christ shewed a general love to the young man, that was but a Moral man from his youth; and if Christ love Morality, he will much more love Piety, and true Sincerity. It is observed of *Timothy*, that of one particular man, *Paul* expressed more love to *Timothy* then to any other: Read over all the Book of Good, you shall never find *Paul* express so much love to any as to *Timothy*; he calls him *Timothy my son, Timothy who serveth me as a child*, and *Timothy my dearly beloved*; and

Matthew 19. 20.

and why was all this? Why the reason is, because *Timothy* from a child was converted, *and knew the Scriptures*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 6. He was from a child converted and called by the Ministry of the word in *Pauls* mouth, and this did indear the heart of *Paul* unto him. You read in the book of *Leviticus*, that when God did require a Sacrifice he would not have an old sheep, but a young Lamb, a Lamb of a year old, and a Kid of the youngest of the Flock: And it was significative in this, not onely to shew that Christ our Sacrifice should die and suffer for our sins in the flower of his age, but also to shew that Jesus Christ looks upon that as an abominable Sacrifice, when you will not be of his Fold while ye are as young lambs. O Beloved, Christ takes it wonderful kindly, if in your youth you do embrace his call.

Fifthly, Yield not to the Devils temptation, considering this, that though you should be converted in your old age, yet Christ cannot but take this very unkindly at your hands, that you should put him off untill your last end, that you reserve (if any part, yet) the worst part for his service. You know when Christ stood all the night for his Spouse, *till his head was full of dew, and his locks were wet with the drops of the night*, he got him gone because she came not, and would stay no longer. O how unkindly (think you) will Christ take this, when he shall wait year after year, and yet you will not embrace his call!

It is said in *Isaiah*, *All the day long have I stretched out my hand to a rebellious people, yet they would not hear*: and *Mal.* 1. *Offer the lame and the blind to thy Governour, will he accept of it?*

Christ must needs take this unkindly, that you should give the Devil the flower of your age, and to give Christ but the decrepit and infirm parts of your lives, that the Devil should suck out the Marrow of your youth, and onely give God the dry bones, a palsie head, a dim eye, a weak body, and so all your services must needs be weak also: and think but how unkindly Christ will take your services thus performed.

Sixthly, consider this, That from your Birth-day to your dying day, you have time little enough to carry on the busi-

ness

neſs of your ſalvation, ſhould you live never ſo long; and therefore you have no cauſe to put off the call of Jeſus Chriſt. And thus much be ſpoken by way of ſatisfaction, to take off the firſt temptation, that you are too young to give entertainment to the call of Jeſus Chriſt: and this I doe for the ſake of young men, that they may take heed of being inſnared by this deluſion of the Devil.

2. *Sug.* 2. Here it may be, the Devil cannot inſnare you in this Gin: Old men will ſay, this concerns not me, I am not taken with this temptation, therefore now the Devil comes upon them with this ſuggeſtion: Saith the Devil to them, You cannot now give entertainment to the call of Jeſus Chriſt, for you have callings in the world to follow; you have a particular calling, and you muſt provide for Wife, and Children, and Familie, and lay up for future times, againſt old age and ſickneſs, and therefore you cannot be at leiſure now to give entertainment to the call of Jeſus Chriſt; when I am more at leiſure, I may look after my effectual calling: And this alſo ſticks very cloſe to a great many.

And to take off this ſuggeſtion of the Devil, I ſhal lay down ſix particulars alſo, by way of Anſwer. As

Firſt, God never intended that our outward calling ſhould any way hinder us in the work of our converſion. God never intended that our imployments upon earth, ſhould juſtle out the neceſſary proviſion for heaven. But God hath ſo given out our callngs here in the world, that he hath made and ordained them to be ſubordinate to our general and effectual calling, to the great buſineſs of Gods glory, and our own ſalvation.

It is ſaid of *Noah*, that *he walked with God, and was perfect in his generation.* And yet *Noah* was imployed by God for ſome time, to wait, for 120 years in a Handicraft-calling, to build an Ark; to ſhew that God did never intend that *Noah*'s making an Ark ſhould any way hinder his walking with God, or carrying on the work of his ſoul. Though you have callings to follow, and families to provide for, yet God did never *Gen.* 6. 14.

ver intend your outward calling ſhould juſtle out your inward and effectual calling.

Secondly, Conſider, you that make this plea, whether you do not imbezel away much time from your outward calling, which you do not imploy in the concernments of your ſouls, but in the works of ſin and Satan. There is many a man that can plead he hath no leiſure to pray, or no leiſure to hear a Sermon, he muſt follow his calling; yet this man can follow a Whore, and follow a Tavern, and theſe men can ſpend a whole day upon recreation, and yet can ſpare no time, find no leiſure to hearken to Jeſus Chriſt. This now ſhould be a great conviction to you that pretend you muſt follow your calling, that you can neglect your calling, to follow your ſenſuall and vain courſes, and yet can ſpare no time to make your ſouls happy.

Thirdly, You that plead your outward calling in the world, to be an excuſe why you cannot hearken to your effectual calling by JeſusChriſt; conſider this, that this plea hath damned many a ſoul before you, and will damn you alſo, if you look not to it. This hath been an ancient plea, *Luke* 14. 18, 19, 20. When Chriſt called a company of men there to come to him, what excuſe have they? Saith one, *I have bought a yoke of Oxen, and I muſt prove them. I have bought a Farm*, ſaith another, *and I muſt manage that. I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come*, ſaith a third. All theſe were lawful callings, and yet theſe callings kept them from Heaven, and kept them from Jeſus Chriſt. You read *Acts* 24. 25. When *Paul* did ſtartle *Felix*'s conſcience by a powerful Sermon of judgment to come, *Felix's heart trembled*; but mark now, how did *Felix* put off the power of the word? Why, *Now*, ſaith he, *I am not at leiſure, but go thy waies, and in convenient time I will ſend for thee to ſpeak of this matter.* As if he ſhould ſay, I am now to go about ſome other buſineſs, about the affairs of my Kingdom, and cannot have leiſure to heare thee now: and ſo by ſome outward imployment, he juſtled the power of the word from his heart, and had not convenient time to embrace Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, Conſider this, That this plea of yours (in making

king your callings an excuſe to neglect your effectual calling) it is the onely way to provoke God to curſe and blaſt all your outward callings to you, and to engage him to curſe all you put your hands unto. *Hagg.* 1. 6, 9. Becauſe they neglected Gods Worſhip, and Gods Ordinances, *Therefore*, ſaith God *you ſhall have much, but it ſhall come to nothing; and what you get, you ſhall put into a bag with holes*: You ſhall loſe all you get, and all you ſow, and all you labour for, becauſe you would not look after Gods worſhip. So *Micah* 6. 13, 14. *I will make thee ſick in ſmiting thee, and deſolate becauſe of thy ſins. Thou ſhalt eat, and not be ſatisfied: thou ſhalt ſow, and not reap: thou ſhalt tread Olives, and not anoint thy ſelf with oyl; and make ſweet wine, but ſhall not drink it. For the ſtatutes of* Omri *are kept, and all the manners of the houſe of* Ahab, *and you walk in their counſels.* As much as if the Lord ſhould ſay, You will not hearken to my Statutes, and to my Counſels, but *Omri*'s Statutes, and *Ahabs* counſel you will hearken to, *Therefore* now, *you ſhall eat, and not be ſatisfied; ſow, and not reap*: That is, God will curſe what you have, and what you do, becauſe you will not hearken to Gods call and counſel. So *Deut.* 28. 38. to 46. *Thou ſhalt carry much ſeed into the field, and gather but little, the Locuſts ſhall conſume it*; ther's one curſe: *And ſhalt plant Vineyards, but ſhall not drink the wine, nor gather the grapes, the worm ſhall eat them*; another curſe: *Thou ſhalt have Olive-trees throughout all thy coaſts, but ſhalt not anoint thy ſelf with Oyl, for thy Olives ſhall fall*; ther's a third curſe. *Thou ſhalt beget ſons and daughters, but ſhalt not enjoy them; all the trees and fruit of the Land ſhall be conſumed.* Now what's the reaſon of all this, that God ſhould thus blaſt their callings and their comforts to them? Verſe 45. *Yea all theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee, and purſue thee, and take thee, becauſe thou hearkneſt not to the voice of thy God, to keep his commandments, and his ſtatutes which he commanded thee.* Here is the reaſon, they would not hearken to God, nor obey God, and therefore God would blaſt their comforts to them. Now then, Beloved, think of this, you that make your callings a plea why you cannot hearken to the call of Chriſt; this plea is a great provocation to engage God to blaſt, and to curſe your very callings to you.

Fifthly, Take this conſideration; that God will the more bleſs you in your callings and proſper you in the work of your hands, the more conſciencious you are in hearkening to the call and invitation of Jeſus Chriſt. And the reaſon is, becauſe *Godlineſs hath not onely a promiſe of the life to come, but of this life alſo.* 1 *Timothy* 4. 8. And *Mal.* 3. 10, 11, 12. *Bring ye all the tithes into the Store-houſe, that there may be meat in my houſe*; that is, ſaith God, Uſe all means, and take all care, that there may be meat in my houſe, that Ordinances may be on foot, that my worſhip may be maintained; and what then? And if you will take care of his Ordinances, God bids you *prove him, and try him, if he will not take care of you,* ver. 11. Marke the words, *Let there be meat in my houſe, and prove me now, ſaith the Lord, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour forth a bleſſing upon you, and there ſhall not be room enough to receive it.* A ſtrange bleſſing: that if men will take care to have meat in Gods houſe, and have a care of Gods ordinances, God would open the very windows of heaven, and make the earth ſo fruitful, they ſhould not have room to receive Gods bleſſings. *And I will rebuke the devourer for your ſakes, and all Nations ſhall call you bleſſed, and call you a delightſome land.* Here now you ſee, if you will take care of Gods Ordinances, and imbrace his call, God will bleſs your outward calling the more; and give you in a more abundant increaſe, if you imbrace the call of Jeſus Chriſt.

6. You that urge your outward callings as a reaſon why you cannot hearken to the call of Chriſt: take this for anſwer, that if truth were known, it is not the urgency of your callings, but the obſtinacy of your wills, and the ſluggiſhneſs of your ſpirits is the cauſe you do not give entertainment to the call of Jeſus Chriſt. If it were mens callings urged them, they would not take pleaſure in ſin; therefore it is not their callings, but the badneſs of their hearts: they do not love Chriſt, and love his waies, but think it too induſtrious a work to labour for converſion; and therefore they make this plea, *Iohn* 5. 40. *ye will not come to me that ye might have life*: When will is wanting, ſaith Doctor *Preſton*, any vain excuſe will be pretended. When will is wanting to walk in the waies of God, any groundleſs pretence will be made to excuſe their negligence

gence. And thus much to take off the second suggestion, that men have callings to follow in the world, and therefore they have no leisure to look after their effectuall calling by Jesus Christ.

3. *Sug.* Thirdly, The Devil suggests, if you give entertainment to the call of Jesus Christ, this will expose you to a great deal of poverty and persecution in this world; and therefore you must not hearken to his call: And he will urge Scripture for this. First, for poverty, the Devil will urge *Matth.* 8. 19,20. Christ saith, *the Foxes have holes, the Birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath no where to lay his head*: The Devil will urge this Scripure, and tell you, you are exposed to poverty, want, and beggery, if you follow Christ. And this we read in history likewise of *Lucius*, the first Christian King that ever *England* had, (and indeed the first Christian King that ever any Nation had, to the glory of *England*; and so *Gildas* in his life tels us) And this King though he was turned to Christianity, yet for many years he had this temptation upon him, that the Christians were poorer then the *Romans*, that did not embrace Jesus Christ; and this temptation he could hardly shake off: the *Romans* were more wealthy, and the *Romans* were more warlike; and so had like to have been overcome with this suggestion. *Agolantus* a heathen Prince, being taken prisoner by the Emperor, and being in his Court, he saw thirty or forty poor men in poor clothes walking in the Palace; and demanding of the Emperor who those poor men were, the Emperor told him they were the followers of Jesus Christ: are they so? saith he; If Iesus Christ keep his followers in such a low condition, I will never follow Iesus Christ. The poorness of Christs followers made him stumble at Christianity. There are many men, especially the gallants of the times, that see a company of poor silly women come with a Bible under their armes, and they embrace the faith, and they love it; and this is a marvellous great offence to them; that they will not follow Jesus Christ, because of the poverty they are exposed to in the wayes of Jesus Christ: And then for persecution also, that they are not onely exposed to want, but to loss of liberty, and good name, and life also; *Matth.* 10.38. You must take up the cross; these

theſe are tedious terms to fleſh and blood, and this doth wonderfully gravel and keep back men from entertaining of Chriſt. Now to take off this temptation of the Devil, that it might not ſeiſe upon your hearts, I ſhall lay down ſix particulars by way of anſwer.

Firſt, That the ſervants of God of old time, they had rather chuſe poverty and perſecution with the people of God, then to enjoy the vanities and profits of this world with wicked men. And this was *Moſes*'s choice, *Heb.* 11.24, 25. *Moſes when he came to years, refuſed to be called the ſon of* Pharaohs *Daughter; chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon; eſteeming the reproch of Chriſt better then all the riches of Egypt. Moſes when he came to years*; it was no childiſh act, but an act of deliberation; and it was no constrained act, but *Moſes choice rather*, it was an act of his own choice, rather to have affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleaſure of ſin for a ſeaſon. It was ſpoken of Mr. *Philpot* his being in the Cole-houſe at *Windſor*, a diſmal and dark place: Saith one, I had rather be with *Philpot* in the Cole-houſe, then be with *Bonner* in his Palace. And being aſked, why, the one being ſo diſmal, the other ſo beautiful? ſaith he, the reaſon is, becauſe *Bonners* conſcience makes his Palace a Cole-houſe; but *Philpots* God, and *Philpots* Chriſt makes his Cole-houſe a Palace. And beloved, this is a truth; though a man ſhould be a beggar, if he be *rich in faith*, he is the happieſt man in the world. Though a man ſhould beg his bread from door to door, if he can beg Chriſt and have him, and beg grace and have it; he is the richeſt man upon earth. This therefore is my firſt anſwer, that the ſervants of God had rather chuſe afflictions with the people of God, then have pleaſures with wicked men.

Secondly, Suppoſe you meet with poverty and perſecution in following Chriſt, yet conſider, Jeſus Chriſt doth make you abundant recompence with that inward peace, and inward joy he fils your hearts withal, for all the outward troubles you meet with in the world. *John* 16.33. *In the world you ſhall have tribulation*; but mark the Cordial, *in me ye ſhall have peace*, therefore *be of good chear, I have overcome the world*. Though you

you have troubles in the world, yet you have joy in me, and peace in me; and therefore why ſhould you be offended?

3. Conſider, Though you want many things in the world, yet you ſhall want nothing that is good for you; *Pſal.* 84. 11. *He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold from them that live a godly life.* If riches be good for thee, thou ſhalt not want it; if wealth be good for you, you ſhall not want it; if eſtate be good for you, you ſhall not want that; for he will with-hold nothing from them that live a godly life.

4. A gracious heart, if he hath or can find that he hath a real intereſt in Chriſt, though he wants much in the world, he thinks he wants nothing, but he hath all things in having a Chriſt; nor will he complain of poverty, when endowed with riches of heaven. *Luke* 22.25. *And Chriſt ſaid unto them, when I ſent you without purſe, and without ſcrip, and ſhooes, lacked you any thing?* Mark the queſtion. Now, if a carnall man had been to anſwer this, what would he have ſaid? What? ſend a man without a purſe, when he wants mony; ſend him without a ſcrip, when he wants meat; ſend him without ſhooes? a man is a poor man indeed that hath no ſhooes to his feet: a carnal man would have ſaid, Yes Lord we want money, and we want meat, and we want ſhooes; but ask the Diſciples, *wanted you any thing? They ſaid, Nothing.* And why was this? Becauſe the Diſciples knew they had a grounded intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, and a right to Jeſus Chriſt, and though they wanted theſe poor outward comforts, they did not want Chriſts comfort, and Chriſts graces; and therefore when they had neither purſe, ſcrip, nor ſhooes, they wanted nothing. Why, O Beloved, if you were of the temper of theſe gracious Diſciples, you would ſay ſo too; that if you can find a grounded and real intereſt in Chriſt, though you want many of the comforts of this world, you will ſay you want nothing. *Wanted you any thing? and they ſaid, Nothing.*

5. You that make poverty and perſecution a plea, Conſider this, that the poor are ordinarily the moſt people that Jeſus Chriſt doth call to embrace his Goſpel. *The poor receive the Goſpel*, ſaith Chriſt, *and bleſſed are you that are not offended at it; Not many wiſe, not many noble are called, but the poor things of the*

the world hath God choſen, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. And in *Iames*, *God hath choſen the poor of this world to be rich in faith.* Do not therefore Beloved make this a plea to keep off from Chriſt, becauſe ordinarily they are the people Chriſt pitcheth moſt love upon, and doth delight to make them rich in grace, who are poore in goods.

6. Conſider, That if upon this ground you refuſe the call of Jeſus Chriſt, you are expoſed to more poverty, and to worſe perſecution then ever you could be expoſed to in the entertaining of Chriſt. In the following of Chriſt you are onely expoſed to an outward poverty; but in neglecting the call of Chriſt, you are expoſed to be poor in faith, and to be ſuch a begger as not to be endowed with one dram of grace, and then you are beggers indeed. As we ſay, he is a poore man that God hates: He that hath not Chriſt, and hath not the treaſure of heaven in him, he is expoſed to worſe poverty a thouſand times then he can be for embracing the call of Jeſus Chriſt, *Rev.* 3. 17. Yea, and he is expoſed to worſe perſecution alſo, and for fear of perſecution neglects Jeſus Chriſt. *Pſal.* 83. 5. *The Lord will perſecute them*, ſaith *David*, *with fury and wrath*, ſpeaking of wicked men. All perſecution from man reaches but to the body, but this from God reaches to the ſoul.

7. And then laſtly, This ſhould not hinder you from following Jeſus Chriſt, conſidering, that though you ſhould be poor, and ſhould be perſecuted, yet heaven will make you amends for all, *Heb.* 11. 35. Heaven will make amends for poverty, when you are endowed with all the riches of Chriſt, and Heaven will make amends for perſecution, when there the weary ſhall be at reſt, and there the troubled ſhall be at eaſe. And thus much be ſpoken of the third ſuggeſtion of the Devil, that if you entertain the call of Jeſus Chriſt, you ſhall be expoſed to much poverty and perſecution here in the world.

SERM.

SERMON VI.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

THE Doctrine I am yet upon is this,

That Chriſtians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſouls, that they are effectually called by Ieſus Chriſt. In the proſecution of which, I have reſolved one caſe of conſcience, and am yet upon the ſecond caſe; namely, what ſuggeſtions the Devil doth uſe to keep men off from embracing the call of Jeſus Chriſt: I have laid down and anſwered three already.

4. Now there is one ſuggeſtion more. When the Devil ſees either of theſe will take place, then he comes in with a fourth, to diſſwade men from imbracing the call of Chriſt, and that is this: Why, ſaith the Devil, if you will entertain the call of Chriſt, you will abridge your ſelves of all the joy and comfort of your lives; you will never have merry daies while you live upon earth. You ſee men that pretend to be converted, and do hear Sermons, what lumpiſh and melancholy men they are, not ſo jocund and jolly as others are, that walk not ſo preciſely; if you follow Chriſt, and his Goſpel, this will caſheer all your merry daies, and this will put you into a ſad temper; all your jovial daies are gone. Therefore to take off this aſperſion, that the waies of Chriſt are ſad and melancholy waies, which hath been an aſperſion that from age to age, and generation to generation, hath been as a gin the Devil hath uſed to keep men from Chriſtianity. And I remember it is one of the greateſt Engines Antichriſt

uſeth to ſupport and uphold his Kingdom. The Papiſts, to deter men from Chriſtianity, and the Proteſtant Religion, they would hold their Diſciples in hand with this, that the ſpirit of a *Calviniſt* is a ſad and lumpiſh ſpirit, and therefore they would diſſwade all Nations from turning to their Religion; and this the Prieſts were to tell in all the Churches of *Rome*, how ſad and melancholy they were that turned to the *Calviniſts* Religion; and this did mightily ſtay the people from embracing the truth. And this aſperſion hath paſſed from hand to hand, and is many times prevalent upon the ſpirits of men that are of the true Religion, that they muſt not be too forward in the practice of Religion, fearing leſt this ſhould work melancholy and ſad thoughts in them.

Now, to take off this, I ſhall onely urge four or five heads briefly.

Firſt, Whereas you ſay, they are melancholy and ſad that are called by Chriſt to a profeſſion of his waies; I would anſwer thus, that they of all people in the world have moſt cauſe of mirth and gladneſs, and they are the moſt truly joyful people in the world. That they have moſt cauſe of rejoycing is apparent: When the Diſciples came triumphing that they could caſt out Devils, heal the diſeaſed, and work Miracles: O, but ſaith Chriſt, *Rejoyce not in this, but rejoyce that your names are written in the book of life, Luke* 10. 20. As much as if Chriſt ſhould ſay, All the endowments and extraordinary gifts of the ſpirit, they are no ſuch grounds of joy, if you had them all; but here is your joy, and cauſe of rejoycing, that your names are written in the book of Life; that you are in Chriſt, and your ſouls ſhall be ſaved. And ſo *Paul* tels us, *Phil.* 4. 4. *Rejoyce in the Lord alwaies, again I ſay rejoyce.* The Apoſtle would not ſpeak it to them with a ſingle command, but doubles his expreſſion, to ſhew, that they that are people that have their ſins pardoned, that have their ſouls reconciled, that have a title to glory, whoſe names are written in the book of Life; theſe of all men in the world have moſt cauſe of joy and gladneſs. And they have not onely moſt cauſe, but they do moſt truly rejoyce, and have more real joy in their hearts in one day, then the wicked can have all their lives, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *They rejoyce*

with

with joy unſpeakable and full of glory. What joy you have in the world, the tongue is able to ſpeak of it, but the tongue is not able to ſpeak of that inward joy that Godly men have in their hearts, upon the apprehenſion of the intereſt they have in Jeſus Chriſt, *Pſal.* 4. 6. *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance.* And *Thou ſhalt put more gladneſs in mine heart, &c.* Pro. 14. 13. *A good conocience is a continual feaſt.* Men are never more merry, then when they are at a feaſt; godly men, they carry clear conſciences about them, and that makes them as joyous and pleaſant, as if they were alwaies at a great and ſumptuous feaſt. Indeed this is true, they do not rejoyce with ſuch exorbitancies of joy as wicked men do. Wicked men rejoyce in ſin, that they canont do; wicked men rejoyce in their luſts, in their drunkenneſs, and their adulteries, and wayes of ſin, that godly men dare not do. Such a rejoycing as this, is the foundation of ſorrow: This rejoycing (like the Prodigal) in a riotous courſe of living, is the foundation of ſorrow, and will meet with you, when you are to die.

Secondly, Grant this ſhould be true; yet conſider, that this ſorrow that godly people have, it is ſuch a ſorrow, that they ſhall have no cauſe to repent thereof, but it is a foundation of future joy to them. 2 *Cor.* 7. 9, 10. *I rejoyce* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in that I have made you ſorrowful.* What, rejoyce to ſee them a ſad people? Yes, for the ſorrow I made you ſorrowful with, was *a ſorrow never to be repented of*, you will never repent of that ſorrow; and therefore *Paul* would do it, becauſe it was a ſorrow never to be ſorrowed for; nay, it is ſuch a ſorrow as is not to be repented of, but it is a ſorrow that layes a foundation to a great deal of future joy, *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy.* But now all the joy of wicked men is a joy to be repented of. They muſt repent of all their jovial bouts, and repent of all their merry paſtimes, this will be ſadneſs to their remembrance; whereas the ſorrow of the godly is never to be ſorrowed for. Pſal. 126.

Thirdly, It is true, it may be they are ſorrowful, but they are ſorrowful for ſin, which you have cauſe to be that are uncalled, as well as they, and more: Now if a godly man be ſorrowful for ſin, this will never prejudice him. Indeed, *Worldly*

ſorrow brings forth death, ſaith the Apoſtle, *but godly ſorrow brings forth ſalvation never to be repented of.*

Fourthly, It may be they are ſorrowful, but how is it? They are not ſorrowful becauſe they are good, but they are ſorrowful, becauſe they are ſo bad. It is not profeſſion makes them ſorrowful, but it is becauſe they can profeſs Chriſt no better, and profeſs him no more zealouſly, this is their ſorrow; and this ſorrow ſhould be in all of us, that we can ſerve God no better, and bring God no more Glory.

Fifthly, They are ſorrowful, but it is not for themſelves, but for thee; they are not ſorry becauſe they are good, but becauſe thou art ſo bad; they are ſorry becauſe of thy ſins, becauſe they ſee thee an uncalled man ſtill, and they ſee thee drunk, and ſee thee profane, and ſee thee diſhonour God, and damn thy ſoul; and this makes them more ſad then they would be. *Lot, his righteous ſoul was vext within him, for the wickedneſs of the Sodomites*; 2 Pet. 2. 8. And Jeremiah, *his eyes run down with tears, for the iniquity of the people* he lived amongſt: And ſo *Paul, I told you before, and now tell you weeping*, there are wicked livers among you, that walk not according to the truth. *Phil.* 3. 17, 18. *Paul* did not weep becauſe he was miſerable; but becauſe he ſaw ſo many wicked, and abominable in their lives. So *David, Pſal.* 119. 136. *Mine eyes run down with water, becauſe men keep not thy Law.* Ezek. 9. 4.

And laſtly, though you ſee ſome men ſad and melancholy, yet think not ill of the wayes of God; becauſe, this way of all other, doth moſt invite to joy and gladneſs in the Lord. *Rejoyce evermore, and again I ſay, rejoyce*, *Phil.* 4. 4. And *Ioh.* 16. *Theſe things I ſpeak*, ſaith Chriſt, *that your joy might be full.* In the profeſſion and following of Chriſt, it is the intendment of Chriſt to give you more joy, then ever you had before; there is no ſuch cauſe therefore to entertain a prejudice by the Divels temptation againſt the wayes of Jeſus Chriſt, when he calls you to profeſs his Goſpel. And thus much be ſpoken to the ſecond caſe of conſcience in reference to wicked men.

There is a third caſe touching men uncalled, and that is, What deluſions doth the Divel deceive hypocrites by, to make them nouriſh preſumptuous perſwaſions that they are effectually

ally called when they are not? And I intreat you, give me your attention a little in the diſpatch of this material queſtion. I ſhall onely lay down four Deluſions, whereby the Divel deceives many.

1. The Devil may delude men by this, becauſe they do delight to hear the word preacht, therefore the Divel would egg on this perſwaſion, ſurely your delighting to hear the word, and your following of Sermons, this muſt needs be an evidence of your effectual calling. And here the Divel would miſapply Scripture. as *Iohn* 8.47. *He that heareth not my words*, ſaith Chriſt, *is not of God; he that is of God, heareth my words.* Now, here the Divel would miſapply this Scripture, and tell you, you that hear Gods word, and delight to hear Sermons, this can be no other then an infallible evidence of your effectual calling. *Deluſ.* 1.

Now, I beſeech you to follow me in the taking off this deluſion, and ſhewing you wherein, and in what caſes, this will prove but a broken reed unto you. And I ſhall ſhew you that in five caſes, hearing the word of God with delight is no evidence of effectual calling, but may be a meer deluſion of Satan. As

1. If your hearing the word, be but a bare hearing, and not a hearing with practiſe, if you have not practiſe joyned with what you hear; and know, your thus hearing the word with delight, is no evidence of your effectual calling. *Ezek.* 33.31. *They come before thee as my people cometh, thou art unto them as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, as one that can play well upon an inſtrument of muſick.* Here the Lord ſets forth with what delight they heard *Ezekiel* preach; they heard him as a man that had a very lovely voice, and they heard him as a man that played upon an Inſtrument of Muſick; much delight they took in hearing. Yet, ſaith God, *they hear thy words, but do them not.* Beloved, though you take as much delight in hearing a Sermon, as to hear the moſt melodious muſick a cunning hand can make; yet if you barely hear with delight, not joyning practiſe with your hearing; this is no evidence of effectual calling. Hence it is *Iames* ſaith, *Iames* 1.21. *Be not hearers of the word onely, but doers alſo, leſt you deceive your own ſouls.* Implying, that you will deceive your ſouls about

about effectual calling, if you onely hear, and do not do. This was the fault of the ſtony ground, *Matth.* 13. 20.

2. If your hearing be a partial hearing, I mean thus; if you hear, and will hear part of the word, or leave but ſome part of your ſins by hearing; will pick, and chooſe both whom you will hear, and what you will hear, in that caſe, your hearing with delight can be no evidence of your effectual calling. If it be a partial hearing, as firſt, that you will hear ſome part, and will not hear the other; to hear the promiſing part, and not the commanding part; to hear with delight the commanding part, and not hear the threatning part of the word: in this caſe, thus hearing will be no evidence of your call. *Mark* 6. 20. *Herod*, it is ſaid of him, *he heard Iohn Baptiſt gladly, and did many things*: There was his partial hearing: he heard him with joy in many things, but he would not do all. Now, if you ask, wherein was *Herods* failing? *Herod* heard the word with gladneſs; yet this was no evidence of his effectual calling. Wherein did he fail? Why mark, compare this Scripture with *Luke* 3. 18, 19, 20. *Herod*, it is true, he heard *Iohn Baptiſt* gladly, while he preached of ordinary matter; but when *Iohn* came to reprove him of his ſins, and told him he was an Adulterer, then he could not endure to hear *Iohn* preach, *ver.* 18. *Many things in his exhortation did* John *preach to the people, but* Herod *the Tetrarch being reproved by* John *for* Herodias *his brother* Philips *wife, and for all the evils* Herod *had done, he added yet this above all, to ſhut up* John *in priſon.* He would hear *Iohn* no more then: Mark how the Scripture points a wicked man; *Herod* heard *Iohn* gladly, when he preached of comfortable and general matter; but when *Iohn* came to reproving matter, and convincing matter, then he would hear him no more; but added this ſin to the reſt, to ſhut up *Iohn* in priſon. So that to be a partial hearer, gladly to hear ſome part of the word, but not all, can be no evidence of effectual calling. So thoſe in *Iſaiah* diſcovered this temper. *Iſa.* 30. 10. *Propheſie to us ſmooth things, propheſie deceits.* There were many men could delight to hear ſmooth and comfortable preaching, but they could not endure to hear a true denunciation of Gods judgements againſt them

for

for their ſins. They love to hear ſome part of Gods will, not all; the promiſing part, not the reproving part: this is no evidence of effectual calling. *Ezek.* 13. 17, 18. There were ſome lying Propheteſſes that did preach, but what did they do? *They ſowed pillows under mens elbows*, and the Lord charges them for it, *that they did hunt after their ſouls.* To preach ſmooth doctrines, and plauſible comfortable Doctrines, is but to ſow pillows, and hunt after mens ſouls. Now, many men love to be ſmoothed up, and flattered in their ſinnes: whereas to be a partial hearer, is no ſign of your effectual calling.

3. Hearing the word with delight, is no evidence of your effectual calling, in caſe this be a fickle and unconſtant hearing. To delight to hear the word, becauſe the word comes in requeſt, becauſe there is no danger in hearing: this wicked men may delight to do, when yet if times of perſecution ſhould ariſe, they would be fickle, and leave off their hearing. *Matth.* 13. 20, 21. It is ſaid of the ſtony ground, that *the ſeed that fell among ſtones, are they that receive the word with joy* (there is their delight to hear) *but not having deep root, in times of perſecution fell away.* Here the Scripture anatomizeth a man, that he may hear the word with joy ſometimes, when the current of the times run for Religion, when the word comes in faſhion among a people: but if perſecution ſhould attend the word, and a priſon attend hearing, you would then ſee how ſlag their delights would be in hearing the word: and in this caſe you may delight to hear the word, yet be no evidence of your effectual calling.

4. In caſe your hearing be a ſelfiſh hearing: As now, many men may hear the word with delight: why? Becauſe they may get profit by hearing, and praiſe and vain-glory by hearing the word, and this may make them wonderfully delight to hear, *Luke* 12. 1. *There was an innumerable company went to hear Ieſus Chriſt, inſomuch the croud was ſo great, that one trod upon another to hear him*; yet Chriſt ſaith of them, *John* 6. 26. *They come to hear me preach, but not for the word I teach, or the miracles I do, but for the loaves they eat of.* It was not love to Chriſts perſon, or his miniſtery, but onely becauſe they

they ſaw Chriſt with a few fiſnes to feed ſo many men, they ſeeing of this miracle, this made them frequent the Miniſtry and word of Jeſus Chriſt. Many men may hear the word, when ſelfiſh advantage accompanies hearing, to get more trading, to be better thought of among their neighbours; this is a ſelfiſh hearing, and in this caſe you may hear, yet not be effectually called. There is a phraſe in *Hoſea* 7. 14. *They cried unto me, and they howled upon their beds, and they aſſembled themſelves for corn and wine.* Here was a people that aſſembled together at the Ordinances of God: but what was their end? there was a dearth and famine likely to come, and here they would uſe duties to be a means to prevent a famine, and get corn and wine together. Here was a ſelfiſh end, and thus men may hear, yet have no evidence of thei effectual calling.

5. If your hearing be a divided hearing, and your delight a divided delight, this can be no Argument of your call. As thus, A man may delight to hear, yet if that man divide and ſhare his delights, partly to ſin, and partly to the Word, this can be no evidence of his effectual calling. In the place before quoted, *Hoſ.* 7. *They aſſembled together, and howled upon their beds, yet they ſin againſt me, ſaith the Lord.* There they divided their delight, they would ſerve God in his worſhip, yet they would ſin againſt him. So thoſe *Iſa.* 58. 3, 6, 7. They took delight in drawing near to God, yet in the day of their faſt, found pleaſure in ſin. Now, to have a divided love to delight in ſin, as well as in Ordinances, this can be no Argument of effectual calling: and your hearing the word in theſe five caſes, is but a meer deluſion. But on the contrary, if your hearing be not a bare hearing, but with your delight in hearing you joyn practice: If it be not a partial hearing, but the commanding and reproving part as welcome as any other: If it be ſuch a hearing as is not ſelfiſh, ſuch a hearing in which you aim more at Gods glory then your own advantage. If theſe be the qualifications, then your delight in hearing the Word is an evidence of your effectual calling.

Deluſ. 2. Yea, but you will urge further, Though this be not an Argument of our effectual calling, yet we can go one ſtep higher

er; We doe not onely delight to hear the word, but we love the godly who are effectually called to grace and glory; and if we love them, we hope it is an argument that we alſo are called: and they urge that Scripture for it, *We know that we are tranſlated from death to life, if we love the Brethren,* 1 Iohn 3. 14.

Now, to ſpeak to this: I anſwer, it is clear in Scripture, that every kind of love to the people of God is no Argument of effectual calling, but there may be a feigned and a counterfeit love, as well as any other grace. Hence the Apoſtle preſſeth, *Rom.* 12.9. *Let your love be without diſſimulation*; importing, that men may diſſemble their love as well as any grace elſe. 1 *Iohn* 3. 18, *Let us not love in word and in tongue onely, but in deed and in truth.* So 1 Pet. 1. 22. *Let there be unfeigned love to the Brethren:* intimating that there may be a feigned and falſe love. So that every kind of love is no evidence of effectual calling. And this I ſhall make out by this demonſtration; becauſe there are ſeveral acts or expreſſions of love, that men who are not effectually called, may ſhew to be godly men. Now if a man uncalled may ſhew many expreſſions and acts of love to a man converted, then mere ſhewing love to a godly man, is no Argument of your effectual calling. I ſhall reduce what I have to ſay unto ſix heads. As,

1. A man may be frequently in the company of godly men, yet not be effectually called; and ſo *Demas* was a companion with *Paul* in the Goſpel, yet he not called, but embraced the world, and fel away.

2. They may ſpeak well of the people of God. And this *Iohn* tels us, 1 *Iohn* 3. 18. *Let us not love in word, or in tongue.* This loving in word and tongue, was to ſpeak well of a godly man; this a wicked man may do.

3. They may write Letters of commendation in the behalf of a godly man. And ſo you read of *Pilat's* Wife, which the Scripture gives as no evidence of her converſion, *Mat.* 27. 19. She wrote a Letter to her Husband in the morning before he was to arraign Chriſt, and told him, *Have nothing to do with the blood of this juſt man.* Here you ſee ſhe wrote in the behalf of a good man, of Jeſus Chriſt. And ſo we read of *Claudius*

Lyſias, that he wrote a Letter in the behalfe of *Paul* to *Felix* the Governour: Here were great acts of love, yet theſe no evidence of their effectual calling. Nay,

4. They may think nothing too much to give to good men, yet not be called. And ſo did the *Galatians*, whoſe calling *Paul* queſtions, *Gal.*4.15. *They would pull out their own eyes, and not think them too dear for Paul*: Yet at length how cold did they grow, *and count Paul their enemy, for telling them the truth?*

5. They may expreſſe ſuch love, that in times of danger they may take care of the ſafety of godly men. So *Acts* 23. 27. *Claudius Lyſias*, when he heard *Paul* was in danger of his life, he came with an army of men to reſcue him, that they ſhould not take away his life from him; and yet *Claudius Lyſias* lived and died a Heathen, for ought the Scripture mentions.

Laſtly, They may relieve the neceſſities of the godly, yet not be effectually called. Now here are high expreſſions of love, yet it is evident, all theſe may be, where calling is not.

But now tis true, in ſome caſes love to the people of God may prove a good evidence of ones effectual call, to wit, if it have theſe four qualifications.

1. If you love the people of God under this notion, becauſe godly, it is an evidence of your effectual call, becauſe there is good in them, more then becauſe you receive good from them. Hence it is *Iohn* tels us, wicked men may love a godly man, becauſe they have good from him. 2 *Iohn* 1. *To the elect Lady whom I love in the truth, for the truths ſake dwelling in her. Iohn* did not love the Lady, becauſe ſhe was a Lady, or becauſe ſhe was a goodly woman, but *for the truths ſake that dwelt in her.* Whereas wicked men they love a godly man, but not as godly, under that notion. Therefore you ſhall ſee the difference between *Iohns* love to a godly perſon, and *Claudius Lyſias*, a man unconverted. *Acts* 23.27. *Claudius Lyſias* tels you there, *that Paul was in danger of his life, and with an army I reſcued him.* Now why was it he did ſo? did he love *Paul* becauſe a godly man? no, for mark the next words: *With*

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an army I reſcued him, becauſe it was told me he was a Roman. He loved *Paul* for his Nation, nor for his converſion: had he loved *Paul* as *Paul*, *Paul* as a Chriſtian, this were an Argument of grace; but to love *Paul* as a Roman, becauſe of Country and Nation ſake, this was no evidence of his call. So *Matth.* 5. 46, 47. *If ye love them that love you, what reward have you? doe not even the Publicans ſo?* So that you ſee a wide difference between the love of a godly man, and of a wicked man.

2. To meaſure your love to them by their graces, that you love that man moſt that hath moſt grace, that is an Argument of effectuall calling, becauſe it is grace in the man, and nothing elſe you love.

3. If your love be univerſal to all that are godly, of what ſort or condition ſoever they be, this is an evidence of your effectual calling; for then it is evident, that grace, as grace, is the object of your love.

Laſtly, to love a man ſo as to carry compaſſion in your breaſts towards him, to have a ſympathizing heart with him in his ſufferings, 1 *Pet.* 3. 8. *Suffer one with another, love as Brethren.* This ſhews your love to be true, when it hath pity and compaſſion to attend it.

I paſs now to a third deluſion, which indeed is a main deluſion, and hath deceived many, eſpecially thoſe that profeſs the Goſpel, to make them believe they are effectually called, when they are not. And that is, becauſe they diſcern a change in their converſation, that they are not the ſame men they were in dayes paſt; and hereby the Devil props up this perſwaſion, that ſurely they muſt needes be effectually called, and he alledges Scripture for it, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. *Such were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed*, &c. Now this being ſo univerſal a deluſion amongſt moſt men in the world, that if they have hopes of heaven, it is upon this ground, that they are not the ſame now they were in times paſt: I ſhall therefore a little enlarge my ſelf in ſpeaking of this particular, and ſhall lay down ſix or ſeven particulars, wherein I ſhall ſhew, that this ground taken in general, is no infallible evidence of a mans effectual calling. *Deluſ.* 3.

First, Because there are many gradual changes, which do not come up, or amount to a saving change or alteration of the heart of man. As there is a change from a Pagan to a Christian; so was *Iulian* changed, yet a man never called by *Iesus Christ*. Then there is a change from a persecutor to be a countenancer of Religion; so we read *Valerius Maximinus* was changed, who was the vilest persecutor of all men in his time, and the hand of God lying so sore upon him for that sin, that his very bowels rotted within him, and the very worms crept out of them, and in horrour of conscience he cryed out to his Nobles about him, perswading them by his example, to take heed never to persecute the Christians more. Now both these were great changes, and yet they are but gradual changes, that leave men abundantly short of those saving changes that God works in them that are effectually called. Thirdly, there is a change from profaneness to profession, and yet this is a step below a saving change. Fourthly, there is a step from profession into sincerity, into a real possession of *Iesus Christ*. Now those three steps they fall short of a saving change, and therefore every change of life doth not argue a man to be effectually called, because there are many gradual changes that do not amount to so high a pitch as this, to be savingly changed.

Secondly, There may be a change in the life, when there is no change in the nature, or in the heart, *Matth.* 23. they may *wash the outside of the cup, when within it is full of pollution.* The life may be changed, the external acts and course may be changed, when the heart may not be changed, and the nature the same still.

Thirdly, There may be a great change in a mans life, proceeding, not from a change in their nature, but from the times wherein they live: the times are changed, therefore they are changed; the times do not favour superstition, therefore they will not shew their superstitious hearts; the times countenance not profaneness, therefore they will not be profane. Beloved, a change in a mans life may flow many times from a change of the times wherein they live, and yet this no Argument of a heart-change, or of effectual calling by Jesus Christ.

Fourth-

Fourthly, A change in your life may proceed from a change in your ſin, not from a change in your heart: As thus; A man may be a Drunkard, may be an Adulterer, may be a profane liver in times paſt, and may change theſe ſinnes for other ſins. He may change his Drunkenneſs into Covetouſneſs, and be a covetous Worldling. He may change his Adultery for Idolatry, and be a ſuperſtitious man. He may change Profaneneſs into Hypocriſie, and be an hypocritical man. He may change his looſe practiſe into a looſe judgment, and be an erroneous man. Now this is no change of the heart, but onely a change of the ſin; you have not the ſame ſins you had, but you have other ſins in place of them; and men may thus have a change in their life, flowing from a change in their ſin, yet no Argument of effectual calling. *Ier.* 2. 36. *Why gaddeſt thou ſo much to change thy way?* The people of *Iſrael* they would be alwayes changing, now they would be for God, anon for *Baal*; now for Gods true worſhip, anon for falſe worſhip; they would be ever changing their ſin, but never leaving it, onely change their old ſins for other ſort of ſins. And ſo there are many men now adayes changed, they are turned from Malignity, and are come to be Profeſſors; it may be they have not ſo groſs ſins now as in times paſt; in times paſt they would oppoſe Religion, and now they profeſs it; though they have left their oppoſition, they have ſome ſin more eminent then that. Many men have been looſe in practiſe, they have changed that to be looſe in judgment; this is no change of heart all this while: ſo that take this for a truth, there may be a change in the life, when the heart remains unchanged ſtill.

Fifthly, There may be a change in mens lives, ariſing from a change in the occaſions to ſin, and not from a change in the heart: As now, A Lion that will go ramping and roaring up and down, devouring his prey when he is at large, yet put this Lion into a Den, there he is quiet, and will offer no hurt: now the Lion is a Lion ſtill, and hath his ravenous diſpoſition ſtill, only he hath not ſo fair an occaſion to ſhew his rage. It is thus with men, many men want occaſions and opportunities to ſhew their wickedneſs, and the evil of

of their natures, and therefore do not discover them: Whats the reason many a man was a drunkard before, and is not so now? It may be drunkenness hath brought beggery, and now he hath not money to sit upon an Ale-bench. Whats the reason a man was an Adulterer before, and is not so now? It may be he hath spent his stock, and spent his strength upon Whores, and now he hath neither strength nor purse to follow after them. It is no thanks to you, if God take away your occasions of sinning: men may be thus changed, yet have no change in the heart at all.

Sixtly, Many men may change their lives, because they come into better company; haply their company is better then in times past, and this may work in them a change in their lives. As we read of *Ioash*, all the while he was in *Iehojada*'s company, he was a well-ordered man in his life; but when he was dead, and he came to have wicked men about him, then he shewed the wickedness of his heart. 2 Kings 12. 2.

7. Lastly, Every change is not an evidence of effectual calling, because there may be a change in the life, proceeding from a wrong principle, and tending to a wrong end: As thus, a man may change his life from a wrong principle, whats that? I will name two wrong principles of a change in unconverted men. As

First, men may change their lives, because of some present outward affliction that lies upon them in this life, their afflictions may inforce them to change their wayes, and not be so bad as in former dayes, *Ionah* 1. 5. when they were in a storm in the ship, *every man went and prayed to his God.* What a change was here? yet the change was onely because of the danger, they were in danger of death, and therefore they grew religious. Every man when a danger and affliction lies upon him, that will make him betake himself to God, and be a better-minded man. And so *Pharaoh*, when God sent ten sore plagues upon him, the plagues did inforce *Pharaoh* to confess his sin, and beg of *Moses* to pray for him; and yet this change in *Pharaoh* was only because of the present affliction that lay upon him which wrought his change. *Ier.* 22. 23. *Oh Inhabitant of Lebanon, how gracious wilt thou*

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be when thy pangs comes upon thee? When pangs and afflictions were upon them, then they would be a gracious people. There is many a man will change his life, when God brings pangs, and death, and ſickneſs upon him; theſe are forced wayes that God takes, to make a wicked and ſtout-hearted wretch change his life. *Iſa.* 16. 12. Its ſaid there, *When Moab is weary, Moab will come to my Sanctuary and pray.* What a change was here in *Moab? Moab*, an Idolatrous company, that hated Gods people, and were enemies to all goodneſs; yet when they were weary, and Gods hand lay heavy upon them, then they would pray, *Ezek.* 24. 12. So that you ſee clearly, though men do change their lives, yet if this change flow only from a preſent affliction they lie under, that Gods hand upon them doth even force them to change their courſe; this is no Argument of a ſaving change, and ſo by conſequence no evidence of your effectual calling.

Secondly, Men may change their courſe from this Principle alſo, becauſe of that horrour of conſcience that ſeizeth on them, in the apprehenſion of hell, and the wrath of God; and from this principle a Heathen may change his courſe. It is noted by one upon that place of *Peter, It happens unto them, as the Dog that turns to his vomit, &c.* Upon thoſe words he hath this note, That the Dog in vomiting carries reſemblance to a wicked man leaving his ſin. Now ſaith the Author, the Dog when he vomits, it is by ſome qualm and pang that is in his ſtomach, and when he hath that pang he will diſgorge himſelf, and eaſe himſelf by vomit; not as if he lothed his meat, but if he could free himſelf from thoſe pangs he would fain have the meat in his body to nouriſh him. Thus a wicked man, he may diſgorge and vomit up his ſins, and leave his ſins, but why? It is not becauſe he hates his ſins, no, he would keep them *as a ſweet morſel under his tongue*; but it is becauſe thoſe ſins cauſe horrour and trouble of conſcience, he cannot deceive, nor he cannot follow his luſts, but conſcience will follow him. Now if thou change thy ſin, only to ſtop conſciences mouth, and muzzle conſcience, this is no Argument of effectual calling.

Fourthly,

Delus. 4.

Fourthly, Men are tempted by the Devil to nourish presumptuous perswasions, that they are effectually called when they are not, because they are miscalled and reproched by the men of this world. Now think they, I should never be miscalled and reproched by wicked men, if I were not called by my God.

Now to take off this briefly, I answer: Every reproch from wicked men, can be no argument of an effectual call from God, because men may be miscalled upon a twofold ground: There are some men *suffer as Christians, and some as evil-doers*; we may suffer either for Christs sake, or for our own sakes: The distinction is laid down 1 *Pet.* 4. 15, 16, 17. *Let none of you suffer as a murtherer, as an evil doer, as a Thief, as a Busie-body in other mens matters; but if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed.* So that some men may be punished for their own evils they have done, and so suffer no more then they have deserved; but other men may suffer for their profession, because they professe Jesus Christ. Now to suffer because of your evil doings, this can be no evidence; but to suffer for Christ, meerly for professing his name, this is an argument of effectual calling. Therefore Christ pronounceth those blessed, *Matth.* 5. 11. *Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and speak evil of you for my sake*: This is an evidence of your effectual calling by Jesus Christ.

SERM.

Sermon VII.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.

THE Doctrine I am yet upon, drawn from these words, is this, *That Christians should put forth a great deal of diligence to make this sure to their soules, that they are effectually called by Iesus Christ.* In the prosecution of which, I have gone over many particulars, and resolved some cases of conscience in reference to wicked men. I am now at this time to dispatch some cases of conscience more, touching them that are effectually called by Jesus Christ: As

1. Whether men that are effectually called by Christ into a state of grace, and hope of glory, may in this life attain to an Infallible and firm assurance of their own effectual calling?

2. If it be found that it is attainable in this life, then what is the reason that many Christians who are effectually called, do so much suspect and doubt their own callings, and walk so sadly for want of their assurance?

3. What must be done that so you may make it sure to your own soules, that you are effectually called by Jesus Christ.

First, whether it be attainable in this life, that men who are effectually called by Christ, may have a firm and infallible assurance of their own call? And in resolution of this I shall briefly free it from two extremes, both of which are untrue about this Querie.

The firſt is that of the Papiſts, who utterly deny any ſuch thing as aſſurance about a mans Calling, Juſtification, or Election by God, and they hold all their followers in ſuſpenſe, affirming that the moſt a man can have is a conjectural faith, an hope or conjecture that he ſhall be ſaved. And hence it is, that in that Popiſh Councel of *Trent* they made this Canon, that if any man doth ſay, that he is bound of faith to believe that he is certainly in the number of Gods called ones, or juſtified ones, or elect ones, let him be *Anathema*, let him be accurſed. That man that would ſo much as take this aſſurance to himſelfe, they would hold that man accurſed. And the reaſon why they do it, is, becauſe they hold another errour, to wit, falling from grace; which they could not maintain, did they not hold this alſo: This it the firſt extreme.

Si quis dixerit hominem renatum teneri ex fide ad credendum ſe certo eſſe ex numero Prædeſtinatorum, anathema ſit. Seſſ. 6. Can. 15

2. Another extreme is of the *Lutherans*; they being oppoſite to the *Papiſts* in this point of aſſurance, to confute them who deny all aſſurance, they run into this extreme, to hold that aſſurance is of the nature of faith, and whoſoever hath faith, hath aſſurance: but this is another extreme, and an uncomfortable Doctrine for doubting Chriſtians, were it true. Therefore to keep this truth in the middle betwixt two extremes, I ſhall lay down this queſtion by way of Anſwer: That though ſometimes perſons effectually called may be without a particular aſſurance of their own call, yet this aſſurance is attainable by Chriſtians in this life; and Chriſtians may be aſſured of their own effectual calling. And this I ſhall proue by four mediums.

Firſt, Becauſe the Apoſtle injoyns it here in my Text, *Give diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.* Now this is a rule in Divinity, No man is bound to do a thing impoſſible, and therefore in that we are commanded and bound to doe it, it is clear that it is poſſible, and may be made ſure.

Secondly, becauſe it is the office of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt to work this particular aſſurance in the hearts of thoſe that are effectually called, that they are in the ſtate of grace, and ſhall be brought to glory. 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. *We have received not the*

the Spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God, 1 John 5. 10. *He that believeth, he hath a witneſs in himſelf*; a witneſs to his own ſoul that he doth believe. *Eph.* 1.13,14. There the Spirit is called *a Seal*; *you are ſealed by the Spirit of promiſe*; and verſe 14. it is called *the earneſt of our inheritance.* Now a ſeal, and earneſt, is to give more aſſurance to a promiſe; and here the Spirit of God is given to Believers as a ſeal, and earneſt-penny, that as they have the firſt fruits in grace, they ſhall have their harveſt in glory. 1 *Ioh.* 4.13. *Here by we know we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us his Spirit.* It is the office of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt to aſſure our hearts in this particular. *Rom.* 8.16. *The ſpirit it ſelfe beareth witneſs with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God.*

Thirdly, Particular ſervants of God in Scripture, that have been partakers of this mercy, they have had this firm aſſurance of their effectual calling. I ſhall inſtance in three; Firſt in *Paul*, and the Scripture tels us of him, that he had a clear evidence of his effectual calling, *Gal.* 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me, who loved me, and gave himſelfe for me.* There he had a particular aſſurance that Chriſt loved him, and gave himſelf for him. So 2 *Tim* 1.12. *I know whom I have believed, and I am perſwaded alſo, that what I have committed to him, he will keep till the laſt day.* So 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is a Crown laid up for me.* Nay not only *Paul*, but *Iob* alſo, *Iob* 19.15. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I ſhall ſtand up before him at the laſt day*: he knew Jeſus Chriſt was his Redeemer. And ſo *David* alſo ſaith, *Thou art my God, and I will praiſe thee, Pſal.* 118. 28. and *Pſal.* 23.6. *Surely the goodneſs and mercy of God ſhall follow me all the dayes of my life.* So that put theſe together: God commands it, it is the Spirits office to worke aſſurance in the heart, and particular ſervants of God have had this aſſurance, therefore why may it not be obtained? But if you ſay, theſe were not ordinary ſervants of God, theſe were ſervants of a higher rank and form; but may ordinary weak Chriſtians know this alſo? Yes; Therefore,

Fourthly, Not onely particular Saints have had this, but the people of God in General; they have declared in Scripture that they have enjoyed this particular aſſurance of their effectual calling, and ſafety of their condition by Chriſt. Inſtance in a few. *Iſa.* 63. 16. *Doubtleſſe thou art our Father.* They made no doubt of it, they were ſo perſwaded they feared it not. *Iſa.* 45. 24. *Surely ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength. Surely*: a word of confidence, they were aſſured they had righteouſneſs for their juſtification in Chriſt Jeſus. So 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *We know, that if our earthly Tabernacle be diſſolved, we have a building of God eternal in the heavens.* They know that when they died, they ſhould ſee God in Heaven; not onely *Paul*, but other godly Chriſtians with him. So *Heb.* 10. 34. *You know in your ſelves, that God hath provided for you a better and a more enduring ſubſtance.* They were aſſured within themſelves, that when they ſhould die, or loſe their Eſtates here, God had provided for them a more enduring ſubſtance. So 1 *Iohn* 3. 19. *Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure our hearts before God.* So ver. 14. *We know we are tranſlated from death to life, &c.* So that what can be more clearly proved then this, that this aſſurance is to be attained in this life? becauſe God commands it, it is the Spirits office to work it, particular Chriſtians have had it; and the people of God in General they have enjoyed and profeſt this Temper.

Uſe. Is it ſo then that Aſſurance is attainable in this life? Then how much too blame are our Adverſaries the *Papiſts*, who holde their followers in ſuſpenſe, that they muſt live without the aſſurance of their own eſtate, that their ſoules muſt hang in fears and doubts all their dayes, that the moſt they can have is onely a conjecture: Oh into what a gulph of diſcomforts do they plunge them! Beloved, the Lord in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, *chap.* 29. did pronounce it as a curſe, that their lives ſhould hang in ſuſpenſe; it is a greater curſe that mens ſouls ſhould hang in ſuſpenſe, that men ſhall not know whether they ſhall be ſaved or damned, it is a hell on this ſide hell; and therefore they are much to be blamed, that hold their followers in hand with a peradventure they ſhall be ſa-

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ved, peradventure not; when the Scripture is ſo clear in this thing.

Secondly, Let not the thoughts either of the impoſſibility or the difficulty of attaining this aſſurance, diſcourage you from looking after it. It is not impoſſible, though it be difficult indeed; and the difficulty ſhould be ſo far from diſcouraging you, that it ſhould quicken your endeavours, to make your calling and election ſure.

Thirdly, Seeing aſſurance is attainable in this life, enquire into the cauſe why you who are effectually called, have not attained this aſſurance before now. And this puts me upon handling of the ſecond caſe of conſcience, ſeeing this aſſurance is attainable, Therefore

Seccondly, what is the reaſon that many Chriſtians who are called effectually by Jeſus Chriſt, do live in many doubts and fears about their effectual calling?

In Anſwer to this I ſhall lay down theſe three particulars, that the doubts that do ariſe in Chriſtians about their calling they flow from this three-fold fountaine.

Either, firſt, from ſome ſeeming defects they apprehend in the manner of their calling. Or

Secondly, ſome ſeeming defect they apprehend to be in the means of their calling. Or elſe

Thirdly, ſome ſeeming defects they apprehend in the effects of their calling; and theſe three grounds are the riſe from whence many Chriſtians effectually called, do doubt of their call, and are not aſſured of it.

Firſt, it doth ariſe from ſome ſeeming defect they apprehend to be in the manner of their calling: They ſay, I am not called in ſuch a manner as I ſee others are. As thus; Think they, I ſee other men when they are converted, that their humiliations are great, I ſee that they have horrour of conſcience, that they are wrought upon by the terrors of the Law, that they are exceedingly humbled before God: Now for my part, I never found this manner of Gods working in my ſoul, I never found that I could ſee my ſins clearly, or could be humbled for them greatly; I never found thoſe humiliations and legal terrors which I hear many men talk of, and this makes

makes me doubt whether I am effectually called or no. Now to take off this, I ſhall onely ſpeak three things by way of Anſwer.

Firſt, That it is true, God doth proceed after this manner with ſome, yet God is not tied and confined to one and the ſame way of working with all. What if he come to you in a calme, when he comes to others in a Tempeſt, if God come to you in a more peaceable and quiet way? What if God do not peirce your heart, as he did thoſe 3000 in the *Acts*, if he kindly open thy heart like *Lydia's* without noiſe? God is not to be tied to one and the ſame way in converting all. As it is ſaid *Iohn* 3. 8. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth*, ſo how it liſteth alſo.

Secondly, You have no cauſe to doubt of this; becauſe it is Gods uſual manner to proceed after this way, onely with ſuch men who have been looſe in their lives, who have been obſtinate in their wils, who have been very ſcandalous in converſation before their converſion and call. But it is not Gods uſual war to work thus upon Chriſtians who have been religiouſly brought up from their youth; it is not Gods way to dowſe them into ſuch a pit of horror, and plunge them into ſuch a depth of fear, that have been of a fair and ingenuous and moral life before their call. As you know it is with Carpenters, they give more blows to knotty Timber, then they will do to ſmooth and tender wood; thus doth God when he meets with a knotty ſinner, a wretched ſtout-hearted ſinner, God muſt give many blows by humiliation, before he will be humbled, before he can bring him to be a ſerviceable piece in Gods building; whereas Chriſtians of a milde and ſofter temper, they ſhall have fewer blows, and ſhall not have the terrors of God ſticke ſo faſt in their hearts, as others ſhall, Hence you read that phraſe, *Hoſ.* 6.5. ſaith the Lord, *I will hew them by my Prophets, &c.* God doth hew ſome men, hew them with judgments, and hew them with terrour: Yea, but others that are not ſo looſe as they; *I taught Ephraim to go, I led Ephraim by the arms, and I drew him with cords of a man, and with the bands of love, Hoſ.* 11. 4. God you ſee would hack and hew ſome men with terror and wrath, but others he

he would draw with love, and the cords of a man. Now ſuppoſe God hath not hacked and hewed thee with judgments, if God melt thee with loving kindneſs, and if God gain upon thy ſoul with mercy, and with love and grace, thou muſt not blame God, thou muſt not confine God; for this is Gods way of working ſometimes, as well as by wrath. God works upon ſome with wrath; he will allure others with loving kindneſſe; ſo that you have no cauſe or ground of fear that you are not effectually called, becauſe you apprehend ſome defects in the manner of your call; becauſe it is Gods uſual way to plunge them in moſt humiliation, and moſt terrour, that have been moſt wicked-lived men before their call, and ſo ordinarily with men religiouſly trained up from their youth.

Thirdly, God when he goes to call a ſinner to converſion, he looks upon the temper of thoſe that are to be called, and God ſees ſome men of a rugged temper, that their tempers will not be won but by wrath, and by fire, and by hell, and by judgment. And ſo its like *Felix* was, his temper was ſuch that nothing could convert him but wrath and judgement to come, terrible Doctrines. Some are of this temper, that nothing but wrath and hel-fire can work upon them. As children, there are ſome that are of ſuch ſoft and tender tempers that the ſhaking of a rod may do them good; there are other children, if a man ſhould whip them every day, they would never leave their childiſh tricks: It is ſo with ſinners, God ſees ſome of a more tender and ſoft temper, that love will gain upon them; others are of a rugged diſpoſition, that nothing but wrath can affright them: Now God in the diſpenſations of his grace, he obſerves their temper, and if he ſeeth love will gain more upon them then wrath will do, he will take that courſe; but if God ſee nothing but wrath, and fire, and horrour will do it, then he will work that way. This you read in the Epiſtle of *Jude*, ver. 22, 23. *On ſome*, ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, *have compaſſion, making a difference; but others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* The meaning is this, There are ſome that you muſt ſhew tenderneſs and compaſſion to; in calling and working upon them, they are

of

of a tender temper; but others there are that you must save with fear, that is, preach terrible Sermons to them, and fright them with hell fire and judgments to come. For God doth observe the different tempers in men, and hereupon doth proceed in different wayes of Administration in working upon them. Now it may be, thou that dost thus complain, thou never hadst these terrours in thy soul, and yet art effectually called, it may be God saw thy temper more to be won by kindness, and more gained upon in a way of love, therefore wrought upon thee this way; God is not bound to one way: And therefore we may justly count them blame-worthy who preach onely free grace, Gods love, and so tye God to one Method: and they are too blame on the other side likewise (if there be any such) that preach onely terror and wrath; for God observes the temper of mens dispositions, some to be knotty, and some soft, and accordingly proceeds in his way of working with them. This ground therefore for your doubts is insufficient.

Secondly, A second ground that makes men doubt of their effectual calling, is upon the apprehension of some seeming defect that may be in the means of their calling. As thus: Think they, I have read in the Word, that it doth please God to use preaching as the ordinary means to call and convert sinners to Christ. *It pleased God by preaching to save them that believe.* I read this also that *faith comes by hearing.* (Now many a poor soul hath this that gravels his conscience, and troubles his spirit) but alas I finde a defect in this means. For my part I cannot say I was converted by hearing a Sermon, that which did worke upon me was some other means. One of these three, either I was converted (saith one) by living in a godly family, among good Christians, seeing their example, that first gained upon me: Or, saith another, I was gained upon by reading a Chapter in the Bible, or in some good Book, and that first wrought upon me: Or, saith a third, it may be, if it was the Word, it was the Word preached by a wicked man, that is now turned either erroneous in judgment, or prophane in practice: and this occasioneth a great deal of jealousie. The word preacht by the

the mouth of a godly Miniſter is Gods ordinary way, but I was altogether out of this way; and therefore this doth make him ſuſpect the truth of his effectual calling. Now Beloved, I beſeech you lend me your thoughts a little, for I would fain make this Doctrine as comfortable to every called one as I can. I ſhall ſpeak of all theſe in order, and ſhew you, that put caſe either of theſe have been the meanes of thy calling. yet thou haſt uo reaſon to doubt of thine effectual calling.

Firſt, thou ſuſpecteſt thy call, becauſe the means hath been, ſayeſt thou, not by hearing a Sermon, or the word preacht, but by living among good Chriſtians, and ſeeing their example and their living, thou camеſt by this meanes to love the wayes of God; and this was the firſt means that converted thee. Beloved, I doubt not but I ſpeak to a great many, that cannot ſay a Sermon ever converted them, but onely, that they were gained to *Gods* wayes, to imbrace the truth, this way: now what ſhall I ſay to ſuch men as theſe? why, I would ſay thus much; that though the Lord did not uſe his Word preached, the ordinary means of converting ſoules, in calling thee, yet God is not tied and bound up to his word preacht, but he may uſe other means to convert thy ſoul.

Secondly, and more particulary, that living among good people, and ſeeing of their example both in life and worſhip, we finde in Scripture to be a very efficacious means oftentimes to convince, ſometimes to convert; and if you can finde out this in Scripture, you may have abundance of comfort. It hath been a means oftentimes to convince, 1 *Pet.* 3. 16. *They ſhall be aſhamed to ſpeak evil of you, while they behold your converſation in Chriſt.* When they ſhall ſee that you live in *Chriſt*, and walk according to Chriſt, they ſhall be aſhamed; aſhamed of what they have doue, and what they have ſpoken; it ſhall convince them. So 1 *Pet* 2. 15. And the Apoſtle when he ſpeaks of the orderly and regular managing the worſhip of God, 1 *Cor.* 14. 23, 25. *If there comes an unbeliever among you, and he ſees, your order* (ſaith he) *he ſhall fall down in the midſt of you, he ſhall be convinced, and ſhall ſay,*

Of a truth God is among you. Seeing this, (ſaith the Apoſtle) godly men holy in their lives, and holy in their worſhip, though he be an unbeliever, he ſhall fall down and ſay, Of a truth God is among you; that is, by way of conviction. Nay further, ſometimes God doth bleſs gracious lives, and blameleſs example of Chriſtians to be a means to convert ſome, when the Goſpel cannot do it; and you would think this very comfortable, could it be made good. I would commend but one Text of Scripture to you, to prove what a bleſſing it is to live in a good family, where either husband or wife, or any one in the family is godly, 1 *Pet.* 3.1. *Wives be ſubject to your huſbands*, what then? *that your husbands that are not won by the Word, may be won without the Word, whilſt they behold the converſation of their wives.* A notable text: There were many wicked Husbands, that all the Sermons they heard would not convert them; yet the Apoſtle tels them, that if the wife did live a godly and holy life, their lives ſometimes ſhould be more efficacious to convert their Husbands, then the Word ſhould be. And this, Beloved, doth clearly take off this firſt plea of yours, that becauſe you were converted by example, and by living among good Chriſtians, and ſeeing their walkings, this gained upon you; this is no cauſe of diſcouragement, becauſe ſometimes (I ſay) the Lord doth bleſs examples of gracious lives, to make them win and gain upon men that are brought home to Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, they go yet further, There is another poor ſoul brought home to Jeſus Chriſt, and what ſaith he? I do miſdoubt the means of my call, for a Sermon never wrought upon me; the firſt thing of all that ever gained upon me, it was the reading ſome Chapters in the Bible, or ſome other holy mans book, and that made me firſt to hate ſin, and love the wayes of God, and look after his word for my ſalvation. And here I doubt not but many Chriſtians have found the word read the firſt means of gaining upon their hearts. And therefore to take off this likewiſe, I ſhall ſpeak two or three things in the way of Anſwer. As

Firſt, that God is not tyed to any means, but can work with the meaneſt means to bring home people to Jeſus Chriſt. If

Peters

Peters converſion was by a Cock, a Cock crowing, and a look of Chriſts eye, why may not Chriſt uſe the Scriptures read to be a means of a mans call? If from ſtones God can raiſe up children unto *Abraham*, why cannot God do it by the Word alſo? to make the Word read a means in his own hands to effect it? God that can do all things with nothing, without means, can bring to paſs great things by weak means.

Secondly, and more particularly, That though ordinarily preaching, and hearing of the Word preached be ordained by God, and crowned by him chiefly to be a means inſtrumental to convert ſouls, yet God ſometimes hath bleſſed the reading of the Word to be a means of converting ſouls likewiſe. Yet, Beloved, I would not do as the Prelates did, who would fain have brought in reading to juſtle out preaching. Preaching is the more noble work, and muſt be higheſt in our thoughts; yet if God will go out in an uſual way, who can controll him? If God will do it by a Chapter read, when not by a Sermon preached, who can reſiſt God? if he will ſhew his power by weaker means, who ſhall gain-ſay it? God ſometimes honours the reading of the Word, to give encouragement to reading, to be a means of ſome mens call. I have read of S. *Auſtine* that he was converted, not by hearing a Sermon, but by opening the Bible, and reading that place, *Rom.* 13. 13. *Let us walk honeſtly as in the day time, not in rioting and drunkenneſs, not in chambering and wantonneſs*: and the reading of this verſe wrought upon him. I have read of *Cyprian*, that he was converted by reading the Propheſie of *Ionas*, hearing of Gods mercy to ſave ſuch a wicked people, and of Gods mercy to *Ionas*, when he was in ſo pettiſh a mood as to be angry with God. I have known likewiſe another, a famous Miniſter, that going by a Book-binders ſhop, he was converted by reading a Sermon of Repentance that coſt but two pence; and hath been a famous Miniſter ſince for the converſion of many hundreds to Jeſus Chriſt. *Iunius* was converted by reading the firſt of *Iohn*; ſo the Eunuch was converted by reading *Iſa.* 53. 7. Beloved, God is not bound to any one way in ſaving man; He that wrought upon *Auſtin* by a verſe reading, and upon another by a Sermon, he can do ſo by thee. Reading is an ordi-

nance of God, and God is not bound up, but may uſe that as a means of thy effectual call likewiſe.

Thirdly, Yea but, ſaith another doubting ſoul, Peradventure I was never wrought upon, neither by ſeeing goodly people among whom I lived, and obſerving their example, nor was I wrought upon by reading good books; but I was firſt wrought upon by hearing ſuch a Miniſter, that I now ſee is run into error; or a Miniſter that is grown looſe in his practice, (haply in theſe preſent times gon to joyn with the enemy againſt the Kingdom) and become a vile liver; and the Miniſter being bad that wrought upon me, makes me queſtion, whether the work be not an unſound and bad work alſo; and this gravels many a Chriſtian likewiſe. To which I anſwer briefly.

Firſt, That ſuppoſe the Miniſter were bad that wrought upon thee, yet the badneſſe of the Miniſter is no juſt ground of making us ſuſpect our calling. For then we ſhould never be ſure of our call. A man may be ſure of his own converſion, though a man may not be ſure of the converſion of him by whoſe means he was called.

Secondly, Again it is clear in Scripture, God may uſe Miniſters that are wicked themſelves to convert others. The Miniſters of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, doubtleſs ſome of them were bad men; *Paul* tells you, 1 *Cor.* 9.17. *I keep under my body, leſt when I preach to others, I my ſelf may be a caſtaway.* Intimating, that a man may preach to others, and may be a means to ſave others, and yet not be ſaved himſelf. So 1 *Cor.* 13. 1. Miniſters in this caſe may be as Cooks are; A Cook may dreſſe many a diſh, and let them go through his hands to furniſh a large and ſtately Table, yet of all theſe diſhes himſelf hardly taſte one: So Miniſters, they may dreſs many a diſh for their hearers, yet they not lick their fingers, or taſt of this ſpiritual food themſelves. As in the building of the Ark, there were many men built *Noahs* Ark, to ſave others, that were drowned themſelves; ſo many men may build an Ark by preaching the Word and the waies of God, to ſave other mens ſouls, when they may be drowned themſelves. Hence it is the Scripture tels us of Stars that fell from heaven; many Miniſters that ſeemed godly Miniſters, like Stars in their Generation, yet they fell,

and

and became wicked and looſe. And I remember Doctor *Pembleton*, a famous Miniſter in the dayes of Queen *Mary*, and a man whoſe Miniſtry had converted many a Chriſtian, yet at length he himſelf turned to be a Papiſt. Now theſe Chriſtians did never miſdoubt or ſuſpect their converſion, becauſe the man that converted them was a bad man; They might be good people, though he was a bad Miniſter; ſo that this is nō ground in the world: though I confeſs it is not ordinary that God makes wicked men means of converſion, but God ordinarily crowns the word moſt in the mouth of a godly Miniſter, yet ſometimes, I ſay, God may uſe ſuch a means to convert ſouls. And I would give you theſe reaſons to prove that a wicked man may convert ſouls, and that God ties not converſion to a godly Miniſter. Becauſe firſt, the efficacy of the word doth not depend upon men, but upon Jeſus Chriſt; and Chriſt may make uſe of whom he pleaſeth.

Secondly, If onely a good man could convert, then this would follow, that we could be as well ſure of another mans converſion as we are of our own; which is a thing moſt untrue. For if only a godly man could convert, then if I were ſure of my own converſion, I were as well ſure of his converſion that wrought upon me alſo; which cannot be: ſo that clearly this ſhould lay no block in your way, becauſe you diſcern the Miniſter that wrought upon you to be no good man, ſeeing converſion is not tied onely to a godly Miniſter.

Thirdly, a third ground from whence doubts ariſe in called ones, is from ſome ſeeming defects they apprehend to be in the concomitants that acompany, or in the effects that ſhould follow effectual calling: and this makes them fear, that ſure they are not effectually called. I will name to you three or four.

Firſt, (ſaith a doubting Chriſtian) I do hear in Scripture what effects will follow, and what will accompany a man effectually called, and I finde them not wrought in my ſoul: As now firſt, I apprehend that when a man is effectually called, he ſhall be inabled by God to call upon him in prayer: I finde in Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. That *all that are called to be Saints, they ſhall call upon the Lord in every place*; but alas, woe is me, I do not finde this in my ſoul. I finde I have a dull, dead, liſtleſſe, unpraying

praying heart all the daies of my life; and therefore I doubt whether I am effectually called or no. Now to this I ſhall lay down three things for anſwer.

Firſt, peradventure you judge that you are not enabled to pray, becauſe you want expreſſions in prayer, though you have affections. Now if you judge your inability to pray, becauſe you want expreſſions only, you judge amiſſe, becauſe prayer is to be judged by the affections, not by the expreſſions. Expreſſions they are but the breath of nature, a natural voluble tongue may tumble out expreſſions; whereas affections in prayer, they are the breath and fruit of the holy Spirit. Therefore do not judge you cannot pray, becauſe you have not ſuch fluent Expreſſions as others uſe, for the very eſſence of a prayer lies in the heart; and therefore it is ſaid, when the Spirit of God teacheth men to pray, it teacheth them not onely in expreſſions, but *with ſighs and groans that cannot be uttered, Rom.* 8.26. When the Spirit moves the heart, and makes you ſigh out your requeſts, and ſorrow out your ſupplications, you pray beſt of all.

Secondly, you that judge your inability to pray, and therefore think you are not called, becauſe you cannot call upon God, I would ſay this unto you: That the beſt of Gods children have found a great difference in their ſpirits in reference to praying duties; the beſt of Gods children do not alwaies pray alike. Sometimes the affections of godly men are as ſwift in prayer, as the Chariots of *Aminadab*; other-whiles they drive as heavily as *Pharohs* Chariots when the wheels were off. Sometimes the people of God are burning in their affections, hot as fire; other-whiles they are frozen in their affections, cold as ice. None of Gods people are in their carriage alwaies alike towards God in prayer. *Pſal.* 77.4. It is the ſpeech of *Aſaph*, *O Lord, my ſpirit is overwhelmed within me, I am ſore troubled, I cannot ſpeak.* The man was ſo troubled, he could not ſpeak, yet *Aſaph* ſpake theſe words with his mouth; but the meaning is, though *Aſaph* was a godly man, yet he was ſo overwhelmed with trouble, he could not ſpeak to God, he could not call upon God with that inward vigor of ſpirit. Though thou mayeſt ſometime call upon God with affection, yet when trouble reſts upon thee, thy heart may be out of frame.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, many times Gods people are ſubject to a ſtate of deſertion, and abatements in their ſpiritual affections, and then they are o t of a praying vein; when you looſe affections, the wheels of prayer are knocked off. Many times it falls out with Gods people, that they are even brought into a languiſhing and low condition, they are in ſuch a ſwoune as if they had neither a principle, nor the actings of ſpiritual life. *Rev.* 3. 2. *Strengthen that which remains*, ſaith the holy Ghoſt, *that is ready to dye.* Godly people may be a dying people, and then the tongue fails, when it is a dying: the people of God may be in a dying conditon; though they never dy wholly in grace yet they may be ſo weakned in their ſpirits, that they cannot pour out their requeſts to God as in wonted time: 2 *Chron.* 17. 3. *Iehoſaphat he walked in the firſt waies of David his father*: implying that *Davids* firſt wayes were better then his laſt. So many men may have their firſt wayes good, yet ſometime in the end before they die, they may have much failing, and deadneſs of ſpirit upon them.

Fourthly, If a man doth but mourn that he cannot call upon God, God looks upon that as calling upon him. If you can but ſigh out your requeſts, and mourn that you cannot mourn, and pray that you might pray; the Lord hears your prayer. This is the moſt melodious muſick you can make in the ears of God. Therefore *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* 6.8. *The Lord hath heard the voyce of my weeping*: There is a voice in Teares as well as in Words. If the Lord ſee thee to weep over thine own ſtreightneſs, and mourn over thine own deadneſſe, the Lord looks upon this with a more pleaſing eye, then if thou couldeſt pour out the enlargements of thy tongue with moſt fluent and voluble expreſſions.

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

THE Doctrine I am yet upon is this, *That Chriſtians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſoules, that they are effectually called by Ieſus Chriſt.* In the proſecution of which I have gone over many particulars, and anſwered ſome doubts, in reference to godly men who are effectually called. As firſt, in regard of ſome ſeeming defects they apprehend to be in the manner of their calling. Secondly, in the means of their calling. And thirdly, (which I am yet upon) of ſome defects they apprehend about the concomitants that accompany thoſe that are effectually called; of which I have ſpoken only of one in particular, to wit, that they cannot call upon God in prayer; I now paſſe to the ſecond.

Secondly, They apprehend that thoſe that are effectually called, they have this to accompany their calling, that they are brought out of a ſtate of ignorance into a ſtate of knowledge, out of a ſtate of darkneſſe into a ſtate of light; hence they will urge this againſt themſelves, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Ye are to ſhew forth the praiſes of him, who hath called you out of darkneſſe into his marvellous* light. And *Acts* 26. 18. He ſent forth his word *to call them from darkneſſe to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* Now ſaith the poor ſoul, Alas, I do not finde this concomitant to be in my heart; I do not find this marvellous light the Scripture here ſpeaks of, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. Alas, my heart is like a dungeon of darkneſſe, and like a houſe that hath no inlets, no window to let in the Sune-ſhine of the Goſpel upon it: and many times this

this gravelleth many a godly minde. Now to thoſe that make this doubt, I ſhall onely ſpeak two or three things to take it off.

Firſt, to you that make this complaint, I would ſay this: that thoſe that know moſt, they know but little in the myſteries of Jeſus Chriſt; as you are not perfect in other graces, ſo you are not here perfect in knowledge; *You know but in part*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9. therefore you have no need to be diſcouraged at this.

Secondly, and more particularly, you that complain of ignorance; though you are ignorant, and cannot find that marvellous light ſhine in your ſouls, which you expect, yet if your ignorance have not theſe three ill qualities, you may reſt confident your ignorance will never prove a damning ſin unto you, but it may be conſiſtent with your effectual calling; As

Firſt, If your ignorance be not a ſtubborn and wilful ignorance.
Secondly, If it be not a ſottiſh and brutiſh ignorance. And thirdly, If it be not a fundamental ignorance.

Firſt, If it be not a ſtubborn and wilful ignorance. Though you are ignorant, yet if you are willing to learn and know the waies of God revealed in his Word, ſuch an ignorance will never damn you: But when ignorance comes to be wilful, that a man doth not know, and he will not learn; a man is an ignorant man, yet he thinks he knows more then all the Preachers can tell him; this is a ſad ſign you are not effectually called. Hence you read, *Prov.* 1. 22. *How long, ye ſimple ones, will you love ſimplicity, &c?* Godly people may be in a ſtate of ignorance but they love it not; therefore, 2 *Pet.* 3. 5. the Scripture tells us of wicked men that *they are wilfully ignorant*. So that if your ignorance have not this bad quality in it, to be a ſtubborn and wilful ignorance, it may ſtand with your effectual calling.

Secondly, Provided that your ignorance be not a ſottiſh and brutiſh ignorance, that is, that you do not ſo lie clouded in a ſtate of darkneſs, that you are uncapable to diſcern the goodneſs of the Word, and uncapable to apprehend any thing that is taught you; that you are not like thoſe, *Ier.* 4. 22. *My people have no underſtanding, they are a ſottiſh people, wiſe to do evil, but to do good they have no underſtanding*. Many men are ignorant men, yet not ſo ſottiſhly ignorant, as not to be capable of learning; if you will teach him, he is willing to be inſtru-

cted; but ſome men are ſo ignorant, they are not capable of learning; you may as well teach a block as them. Hence it is the Prophet complains *Iſa.* 1. 4. *The Oxe knows his owner, and the Aſſe his Maſters crib, but Iſrael knows not the Lord his God.*

Thirdly, In caſe your ignorance be not fundamental ignorance, I mean ſuch an ignorance, as not to know thoſe neceſſary and fundamental points in the Word, that muſt be known if ever you be ſaved; as about Jeſus Chriſt and ſalvation, and juſtification by his blood, and faith in his Name, &c. though you may be ignorant about circumſtantials, yet if it be not in fundamentals, your ignorance may be conſiſtent with effectual calling. But now

Thirdly, If a godly man be ſatisfied in theſe two points, and thinks haply, I may have the firſt concomitant, to call upon God, and ſo evidence my effectual call, and then haply the ſecond may not be wanting in me, that I do not lie under the ſtate of a wilful, ſottiſh, and fundamental ignorance: But, alas ſaith he, I want a third concomitant that accompanies effectually calling, and that is, I finde in the Word, that they that are effectually called, they are brought into an Obediential frame of heart to all the waies of God, that what ever God commands them to do, their hearts can readily obey; and this I finde, *Rom.* 1. 5,6. *God hath called them by his grace unto the obedience of faith.* Now alas, ſaith a poor ſoul, I find a defect in this concomitant likewiſe, I cannot diſcern that I am called to an obedience flowing from faith as its principle, I cannot find this frame of heart to be in me, and therefore I doubt of my effectual calling. This I ſhall labour to take off likewiſe.

Firſt, When I ſay that obedience is a concomitant that will accompany one effectually called, I do not ſay nor intend it of obedience in the actings of it, but of an obediential frame of ſpirit in the purpoſes of it. Many men may be effectually called, when they may not alwayes live in the acting of obedience to Chriſt; but every man effectually called hath an obedient frame of heart, that is, he hath purpoſes and intentions, and reſolutions to obey God, though he cannot act what he would do; he hath obedience in the habit, and obedience

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in his purposes and resolutions alwayes attending him.

Secondly, you find in Scripture, that the strongest and ablest Christians who have done most for God, have sometimes been very defective in the Actings of obedience, that they could not do what they would do for God. And therefore *Paul* complains, *Rom. 7. The good that we would do, we cannot do.* *Paul* himself that was a pillar in Gods house, yet he tels you, he could not go out in those Actings of obedience which in his heart he would do; and therefore if you would willingly do more then you do, God accepts of the little you do.

Thirdly, Though you cannot put forth many Actings of obedience to God; where there is readiness of mind and heart, God accepts the purposes of the mind for the Action it self, *2 Cor. 8. 12. Where there is a willing mind, it is accepted of God as if the deed were done.* And thus much be spoken to the second case of conscience, why men effectually called do so much doubt of their own call.

Doubt. 3 Thirdly, Seeing Christians must put forth diligence in making their calling sure; therefore now whereabouts must this diligence of ours be conversant or in what chanel must our diligence run, that we might be sure of our effectual calling? This is a very material question; and in resolving of it, I shall answer it in these two generals.

First, if you would get assurance of your effectual calling, you must put forth diligence to remove those things that will hinder you in making sure your calling. And

Secondly, use diligence to set upon the practice of those duties that may further you in making this sure that you are effectually called.

First, you must remove those things which do much hinder you from being assured, and those hindrances that are to be removed, I shall comprise under six heads; As

First, you must use diligence to remove Melancholy from your Thoughts; This is a natural hindrance of assurance: Melancholy is a temper in man arising from a black blood running about the body, that doth naturally occasion distrust and fear in mens mindes; this temper being in the body, doth work much upon the disposition of the soul. Now if

your temper be Melancholy, and ſo diſpoſe you to diſtruſt and fear, this will be a great ſtop to your having of the joyes and comforts of the Lord in your hearts, in aſſurance of his love. It is a note *Perkins* hath upon *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he eate graſs like a beaſt; he writing upon that place, thinks, that *Nebuchadnezzar* was in a deep Melancholy and that did ſo poſſeſs him, that he could not tell whether he was a man or a beaſt, though, ſaith he, he did not eate graſs, but his deep perplexity ſeiſing upon him did make him think that he was from a man turned into a Beaſt. Beloved, Melancholy in a Chriſtian, it will make him think himſelf an Hypocrite, when he is a Saint; and therefore take heed of a Melancholy, lumpiſh and ſad temper; it is a very great hindrance to this grace of aſſurance. This I lay down onely as a Natural remedy.

Secondly, A mind filled with worldly cares, and running into incumbring imployments in the world, this is a great hindrance of aſſurance. The cares of this life, *Mat.* 13. 15. are compared to thorns: Now thorns they choke the ſeed, by drawing the juyce that is in the ſeed to themſelves, and ſo the corn doth not grow where thorns ſpring. The cares of this life they are like thorns in this, they are of an attractive power to ſuck and draw the juyce of your ſpirits and comforts to themſelves, ſo that you cannot have the juyce of your ſpirits in gathering your evidences for heaven; the more incumbred you are in the world, the leſs clear you will be touching the evidence of your everlaſting condition; The cares of this life, *they peirce the ſoul through with many ſorrows.* Now when a man is peirced through with many ſorrows, he is in a very unfit temper to be raiſed up in ſpiritual joy; the more you incumber your ſelves in the imployments of this world, the leſſe you will be in the comforts of heaven. I remember it was the ſpeech of a Pope when he lay a dying, When I was a painful preaching Miniſter, then I had hopes of my ſalvation; when I came to be a Cardinal, I doubted of it: but when I came to be a Pope, I deſpaired of it; I was I was ſo entangled in the affairs of this life: Beloved, ſo I may ſay to you, When you were but ordinary Chriſtians in the world, you were in a way to get aſſurance of your ſalvation, but ſince you have been taken up with the affairs of the world, it doth ſo di-

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ſtract your minde, that you may be in no compoſed temper to have any ſetledneſs of heart about your everlaſting eſtate. It is the obſervation of Philoſophers, that the Sun is eclipſed by the interpoſition of the Moon, the Moon coming between the Sun and our ſight: Beloved, the Sun of your comforts comes to be eclipſed by the Moon, which is made an Emblem of the world, *Rev.* 12.9. Now if the Moon of the world comes between your comforts and you, it will miſerably darken and eclipſe your comforts to you. Nothing in the world doth ſo much impede your comforts in aſſurance, as incumbring and carking cares about the things of this world.

Thirdly, Take heed you do not harbour the guilt of any one known ſin upon your conſcience. Keeping of ſin upon the conſcience is a great impediment to your inward comforts. You will never be aſſured while you do thus; and therefore if ever you would have aſſurance, remove this. It is an obſervation of Mr. *Hilderſham* upon *Pſal.* 51. 12, 14. What doth *David* do when he prayes for aſſurance? ſaying, *Reſtore to me the joyes of thy ſalvation, eſtabliſh me with thy free Spirit*; Reſtore my comforts, and my evidences to me. And what courſe doth he take? Read verſe 14. *Deliver me from blood-guiltineſſe. O Lord*: As much as if he ſhould ſay, All the while that ſin lay upon conſcience unrepented of, (as it did for nine monthes together) all that while *David* loſt the joyes of the Spirit, and loſt the comforts of Heaven; And therefore when he comes to renew his comforts, and reſtore his aſſurance, he doth with begging of God for aſſurance, beg of God alſo to deliver him from blood-guiltineſſe; as knowing, that if this ſin ſhould be upon conſcience unrepented of, and unpardoned, he ſhould never have the joyes of Gods Spirit reſtored. Beloved, you will never have aſſurance of your effectual calling, till your conſciences are freed from having ſin upon them with approbation. It is an obſervation that *Ariſtotle* hath about earth-quakes, that they are occaſioned by wind got into the Caverns and hollow places of the earth, which having no place for vent again, it makes ruptures, and overturns houſes and mountains and all before it: Sin upon the conſcience unrepented of, is like winde in the earth, it will make

make a heart-quake there, that there shall not be that calmness, and quietness, and settledness of minde which there would be, were sin away. Hence we read, *Isa.* 33. 16. *The sinners in Sion are afraid, and fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrite*: The sinners are afraid; those who had guilt upon them, their sins bred terrour and fear; & hypocrites that are conscious to themselves of their own guilt, fearfulness surprizeth them, but the upright and sincere in heart were not so; To note, that this is a great enemy to inward peace, and to assurance about your everlasting estate, if so be you harbour sin upon the conscience unrepented of. And it is just with God it should be so; because if you keep sin in your hearts, that will be ever jarring with Heaven, it is just with God to be at oddes with you.

Fourthly, Avoid the casting of your eye, in a way of dejection, upon others who are more eminent in grace then you, and have got a precedency of you in the wayes of godliness. 'Tis true indeed, a man that is given to spiritual pride, and self-conceitedness touching his own goodness, it is fit that he should look upon those that have a precedency before him in grace, the more to humble him: But for a man that lies under trouble of minde, and doubtings touching his everlasting estate, that man should not look upon others more eminent then he is in grace, because it will rather increase discomforts, then any way work assurance in you. If you look upon the glittering beames of the Sun shining in its full strength, the more you look upon that orient and resplendent body, the more it will dazle your eyes, that you cannot behold but dimly things upon the earth: It is so with Christians; some Christians they shine like so many Suns in the firmament, their graces do so shine and sparkle, that if you look upon them, they will even dazle your eyes, and make you blinde, that you cannot see those small scantlings and sparks of grace that are in your own hearts. In case therefore you would get assurance, avoid the casting of your eye too much upon those that have a precedency in grace before you.

Fifthly, Take heed you make not sense and feeling the Touchstone to try your effectual calling by; sense and feeling will deceive you in the matters of your calling. I may allude

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to that paſſage in the book of *Geneſis:* you know old *Iſaac* was dim-ſighted, and by reaſon of his old age, he run into a miſtake by feeling; He had *Iacob* by the hand, and by feeling thought it had been *Eſau*. Beloved, many of us are dim-ſighted in our comforts, and in our graces, and if we truſt to feeling, we may be deceived as *Iſaac* was. You may think when you have *Iacob* by the hand, I mean grace in the heart, that is but an *Eſau*, it is but a reprobate. Therefore take heed of making ſenſe and feeling the Touchſtone to try your calling by. A childe is borne, yet knows not that it is born; lives, yet knowes not that it lives; but thoſe about it do: ſo a Chriſtian may be born again, live the life of grace, and yet not be ſenſible of it.

Sixthly, Give diligence to remove this hindrance, to wit, Pride in your gifts, and dependence upon your graces. Pride and dependence, they are not only murderers of comforts, but they murder our graces alſo; and if God ſees you ſwell with pride, becauſe you abound in graces, he will ſoon prick that ſwelling bladder. It is the obſervation of a Modern Divine, that exaltings of ſpirit after aſſurance attained, will inevitably expoſe a Chriſtian either to great comforts, or to great ſins. Hence the Scripture makes mention, that pride of your gifts is not onely an enemy to the comfort, but an enemy to grace; not onely an enemy to the comforts from grace, but to the very having of grace. *Hab.* 2. 4. *If a mans heart be exalted, his ſpirit is not upright within him.* James 4. 6. *God reſiſts the proud, and gives grace to the humble.* So that pride is not onely an enemy to your comforts, but to the very getting of grace likewiſe; when the branches of a Vine grow luxuriant, they ſhall have the pruning hook. And thus you have the firſt ſort of helps laid down to you; In caſe you would get aſſurance, you muſt uſe diligence to avoid thoſe things that may be a hindrance to you in getting aſſurance of your call.

Secondly, A ſecond ſort of helps in caſe you would get aſſurance, is to uſe diligence in the practice of thoſe things that may be helps and furtherances to the obtaining of aſſurance about your effectual calling. And here I ſhall name onely ſix or ſeven particulars.

First, Exalt arguments of faith against present feelings; If so be that you will once enter the lists to dispute with the devil, he will out-cavil you, and *non-plus* you. The devil is a cunning Logician, and it is not safe, saith Doctor *Preston*, to argue with the devil; the devil will out-dispute, and out-argue you. It is a Christians work to exalt arguments of Faith against present feelings. In case you would get assurance, you are to do as *Abraham* the father of the faithfull did, when he was to believe a thing that sense and reason would tell him should never come to passe; It is said of *Abraham*, *Rom.* 4. 18, 19. That *in hope he believed against hope*. He would exalt faith against sense. And how was it? God promised *Abraham* a child; reason and sense would have told *Abraham*, *Abraham*, thou art a hundred years old, thy wife nintey nine, her womb is barren, and it is not likely you should have children; but *Abraham* would not argue thus, but would exalt arguments of faith, and apply Gods Promises, and Gods Word, exalting these; *Abraham* did believe in hope against hope. Beloved, so must you: though you say you have a barren womb, Grace is not likely to grow in you, and though you are old, and decrepit, and feeble Christians, yet advance arguments of faith from Gods love, and from Gods power, and from Gods Providence, and Gods Promises, and thats the way to get your comforts clear and full. I may apply what *Fox* in his Acts and Monuments reports of a good woman that was called before *Bonner* and the rest in Queen *Maries* Reign that sate in Judgement about her Religion, they see her, though a poor and silly woman, yet kept firm to her principles, and would not deny her Religion. At length *Bonner* sent some learned Doctors to dispute with her, and argue the case about some points she held; they coming to see her she puts them off with this saying, Well, you are Scholars, and you come to dispute; I must needs tell you, I cannot dispute, but I can burne for my Religion. Beloved, I would have you answer the devil thus, if he comes to out-wit and cavill with you about your comforts, say you cannot dispute, but you can believe; you can lay your help on Jesus Christ, *upon one that is mighty*, and exalt arguments of faith, and this will much strengthen your comforts.

comforts. *Luke* 8. 42. *There came a Ruler to Iesus Christ, and besought him for his daughter that lay a dying*: And while he was telling Christ this, there came another messenger after him, *Thy daughter is dead, trouble the man no further*: What saith Christ, hearing this? *Fear not, onely believe.* As if he should say, sense and reason would have told him it were a needless thing to beg of Christ for his daughter when she was dead; but saith Christ, Do not stoop to sense and reason, *Fear not, onely believe*, and the work shall be done: So I say to you, Consult not with flesh and blood, but exalt arguments of faith against present feelings; and this is the way to get assurance of your comforts.

Secondly, Keep conscience clear, that no sin be harboured there, and you are in the way to have your comforts full. *God*, saith *David*, *will speak peace to his people, but they must not return unto folly.* As if he should say, though God doth speak peace, and assure you of your pardon and salvation, yet if you return to sinne, God can tell how to break your peace, and turn his smiles into frowns and angry looks. Take heed of sin, and keep your conscience clear, and thats the way to have peace setled in thine heart, *Iob* 11. 14, 15. *If iniquity be in thy hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy Tabernacles.* What follows? *and then shalt thou lift up thy face before God without spot, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear.* A strange expression, That if you will keep sin far away, then you shall be stedfast before God, and not fear; that is, you shall not be exposed to those fears and doubts and anxieties which other men are exposed to. *Heb.* 10. 22. *Let us draw neer to God with an upright heart, in full assurance of faith.* Now what shall a man doe to come to God in full assurance? Mark the next words, *Draw nigh to God in full assurance of faith, having your hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience.* Here is the way, if you are sprinkled from an evil conscience, you may be bold to come to God in full assurance. Whereas, alas, if thy conscience tell thee thou art a Whoremaster, and thou art a deceiver, and a liar, and loose liver, thou canst not come with full assurance; thou mayst come in presumption indeed, but not with the assurance of faith: and therefore keep a

conscience cleare from harbouring guilt upon it, and thats the way to have the heart full of joy.

Thirdly, Be diligent in keeping company with the most godly experienced Christians where you live, this is a very special way to increase your comforts. Ye read an excellent passage, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. *We are comforted of God*, saith the Apostle, *that we might comfort others with the comfort wherewith we are comforted of God.* Godly Christians they will comfort you with the same comforts wherewith they themselves are comforted. *If we are comforted, it is for our consolation.* Godly men, if they have any inward comfort from God, they will impart their experiences to you, and tell you as *David* did, *Psal.* 66. 16. *What God hath done for their soul.* There is no way better then this, to keep in communion with godly and knowing Christians. Mr. *Bradford* that famous Martyr, who was in prison about his profession of Christ, the story saith, he lay a long time under trouble of minde, and horror of conscience, that he could not finde a real and clear evidence of his effectual calling; there came many men to him, and could not settle him: yet a poor Weaver, an ancient and experienced Christian, that did usually accompany Mr. *Bradford* in prison, by his frequent communion with this poor man, he got more inward comfort then ever he got all his life before. Beloved, this I speak to you to make you the more to study the worth of godly society, and the more you are conversant with Christians that live in the enjoyment of the light of Gods countenance, and in the assurance of his favour all the day long, the more you are in the ready way to increase your comforts and assurance.

Fourthly, Submit thy selfe to the approbation of others, and be willing to have them passe a verdict upon thee. When thou art asleep or in a swoun, then thou canst not tell thy selfe what thou dost, but others must tell thee; So it may fall out with the godly; they may be in such a spiritual swoun, that they are not fit judges of their own condition; in this case submit to the judgment of others, they may see grace in thee, when thou thy self canst not see it; so Mr. *Throgmorton* was comforted by the testimony of a company of godly Ministers.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, live in the dayly improvement of grace, and thats the way to get assurance. And this meanes the Holy Ghost layes down in the Chapter out of which my Text is taken, *Adde grace to grace.* And I remember that *Beza* upon this Text doth write, that in the Greek Translations these words are put in, *Give diligence by good works to make your calling sure:* whether it be so or no, I cannot affirm, but this I am sure of, and the context will clearly prove it, that the way to make your calling sure, is to adde grace to grace. For after the Apostle had spoken of adding grace to grace, he comes in with this, *Give diligence to make your calling sure:* Implying that the more you live in the actings of grace, the more you shall live in the enjoyment of comforts. *Isa.* 32. 17. *The worke of righteousnes shall be peace.* Not the habit, but the work; if you act righteousnes, and live in the workings and thrivings in grace, this shall be peace, and the effect of it quietnesse and assurance for ever. So *Iohn* 16.24. *The more you pray the more you increase your joy.* So that the more you live in the improvement of grace, the more likely way you are in to get assurance.

Sixthly, If you would get assurance, spend more time in strengthening your evidences for heaven, then in questioning of them. It is the great fault of many Christians, they will spend much time in questioning and not in strengthening their comforts. They will reason themselves into unbeliefe, and say, Lord, why should I believe? why should I take hold of a promise, that am so unholy and so unmortified a creature? And so by this they reason themselves to such a passe, that they dare not lay hold upon Christ; whereas it should be your work to reason your selves into Christ as much as you can. Labour to strengthen your comforts, and reason thus, Why should I not believe in Christ? Thus *David* did, *Psal.* 42. *Why art thou troubled O my soul, and why art thou cast down within me?* Is not the mercy of God more then sin in the creature? Is not there free grace where there is guilt? Are not there pardoning mercies, where condemnation is deserved? you should reason up your comforts, rather then reason them down, and spend more time in strengthening, then in que-

ſtioning of them. You would count him a very unwiſe man, that hath a Leaſe of much land, and he himſelfe ſhall create ſcruples and doubts, and ſhall uſe no meanes to make his Title good: And truly many Chriſtians are as unwiſe for heaven; they have, as I may ſay, good bond and ſeal that God will bring them to heaven, and yet they will queſtion, and cavil themſelves into unbeliefe. Beloved, this ſhould not be, but you ought rather to ſtrengthen your comforts, then queſtion them.

Seventhly, Be diligent in the earneſt ſtudy of the Covenant of grace: Beloved, all a Chriſtians doubts ariſe from ignorance of the Covenant of grace. And here that I may ſpeak a little of it, I beſeech you follow me, ſtudy the Covenant of grace, which if you do, you ſhall diſcern five particular props in it to bear up your hearts againſt diſcomforts, and to ſtrengthen you in a way of aſſurance touching your effectual call.

Firſt, the Covenant of works it commands perfect obedience upon pain of damnation; but the Covenant of grace doth command and accept of imperfect obedience, if it be ſincere: there's your firſt prop.

Secondly, the Covenant of works is not contented with good deſires, unleſſe there be good works; the Covenant of grace accepts the good will and good deſires when the deed is wanting, and is content with the will for the deed.

Thirdly, the Covenant of works doth require that you ſhould obey the will of God perfectly in your own perſon; the Covenant of grace requires onely that you obey in the perſon of Chriſt; ſo Chriſt obeys for you, it is accepted, though you do not.

Fourthly, the Covenant of works requires you to obey the whole will of God by your own ſtrength; the Covenant of grace accepts of it, though not our own ſtrength, but the ſtrength of Chriſt be put forth in doing any ſpiritual action.

Fifthly, the Covenant of works requires the performance of the condition before it gives the Promiſe; As, *Do this and live*; you cannot live, ſaith the Covenant of works, without you do this: but the Covenant of grace, it firſt tenders the Promiſe,

Promiſe, and then requires the condition: Bids you firſt take Chriſt, and firſt believe, and then ſhew forth the effects of faith. Firſt, lay hold upon the promiſe, and then hold forth and practice the condition of that Promiſe. Firſt believe, and then take Chriſt, though thou art unworthy, and a wretched creature, if after taking of him thou wilt be conſciencious to practice thoſe obligations that lie upon thee, and I will accept thee. Now would you lay theſe to your heart, to ſtudy that vaſt difference between the Covenant of works and the Covenant of grace, doubtleſs theſe would be great props for your inward comforts.

SERMON IX.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

THE point of Doctrine I am yet upon in the proſecution of theſe words, is this: *That Chriſtians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſouls, that they are effectually called by Jeſus Chriſt.* In the handling of which I have gone over many particulars, and reſolved ſeveral caſes of conſcience. I have yet two caſes more to reſolve, and then ſhall winde up all in a general uſe. Therefore

Fourthly, When, or at what time doth God fill the ſouls of his people moſt with the aſſurance of their effectual calling. And then

Fifthly, Wherein lies the difference between that aſſurance a godly man hath of his effectuall calling, and thoſe preſumptuous perſwaſions that wicked men have, that

that they are called effectually, when they are not.

Firſt, when, or at what time doth God give to his people moſt and ſtrongeſt aſſurance of their effectual calling? And here in anſwer to this, I ſhall compriſe all I have to ſay under four heads; that in four caſes or times God doth uſually give to his people moſt ſtrong aſſurance.

Firſt, After the Lord hath greatly humbled the hearts of his people, and broken them for ſin, then doth he uſually give in moſt aſſurance of a mans effectual calling, and of the happineſs of his future condition. When you can ſay as *David* did, *Pſal.* 38. 3. *There is no reſt in my bones, by reaſon of my ſin.* When you can ſay as the *Pſalmiſt* doth, *Pſal.* 51. 8. *Let the bones which thou haſt broken rejoyce.* Then is the time for God to make you break forth with joy, when he hath broken your hearts with ſorrow. God had broken *Davids* heart under the ſenſe of that uncleanneſs he had committed: O ſaith *David*, Thou haſt broken my heart, now let my broken ſpirit rejoyce; and God gave him comfort, and did reſtore the joy of his ſalvation to him. You have a phraſe, *Pſal.* 34. 18. *The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart, to ſave them that are of a contrite ſpirit.* The Lord is nigh to them. Nigh, what to do? not onely to give them deliverance from outward trouble, but from inward ſorrows; to give them inward joy, and inward comforts, *that the bones which he hath broken might rejoyce.* The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken ſpirit, to give them comfort, *Luke* 4. 18. Its ſaid there, that *the Spirit of the Lord was upon Chriſt*; what to do? It was *to binde up the broken in heart, and to comfort thoſe that mourn.* So *Eſa.* 61. 1, 2, 3. *To thoſe that mourn he ſhall preach comfort, and bind up the broken-hearted.* When the Lord hath broken you under ſin, and humbled you under the ſight of your evils, then is the time when God will break in upon you with great joy. *Mat.* 11. 28. *Come unto me all you that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt*; Reſt there hath not only reference to our reſt in heaven, that we ſhall reſt there from ſin, and reſt there from ſorrow, and reſt there from temptation; but *I will give you reſt*, it hath reference alſo to a promiſe in this life, that if you are heavy laden, that you count your iniquities a burden too hea-

vy for you to bear, Christ hath promised you peace, inward peace in your own consciences, in the assurance of your everlasting estate, in assurance that you are called to a state of grace, and shall come to a state of glory. You know when the ground is plowed, the clods are broken, and the breaking of the clods makes way for the deeper rooting of the corn, and that it may spring up with greater increase. It is so when ye *plow up*, in the Prophets language, *Ier. 4. the fallow ground of your hearts*; when you break the clods of your hearts by humiliations, this makes way for the corn and grain, that precious grain of assurance to spring and grow up to a fuller measure; so that you are out of Gods way then to have strong assurance, that never have been humbled in the sight of sin. I say its Gods ordinary way: I do not deny but God may bring you to heaven, though you have no legal workings and horrors upon you; yet God will never give you such strong assurance, and such ravishing comforts, as he gives them that are most broken in spirit. Look through the whole verge of Scripture, and you shall find that those that were most broken in heart, they were most strong in comfort. That house that hath the deepest foundation, is like to be the most beautiful Fabrick and Building; whereas your tents and lesser cottages, a little rooting in the earth will serve their turne: It is likely God may make thee as a little cottage, though not deeply rooted; but thou wilt never be reared up a beautiful building, to become an amiable Christian in point of comfort and assurance, if God have not bottomed thee low in humiliation. Its a true rule in grace, *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.* The deeper you are in sorrow, the higher you shall be lifted up in joy.

Secondly, after the people of God have been tossed and tumbled, and turmoiled with the violent assaults and temptations of the devil, then is Gods time of filling his people with greatest joy and most comfort. You know at the Mill, at the Floodgate, when the stream goes strongest, then the Mill goes fastest. Beloved, God lets the stream of temptation grow strong against thee, but to make thy Mill to go, to make thee grind thy lusts to powder, and to make thee grinde thy sinnes as corne

under

under the Milſtone. God doth but make the flood to be ſtrong at the gate, to make thy comforts to be more ſtrong, and thy graces to be more firme. When God lets in the flood of temptation, and toſſeth thee upon thoſe waves and billows, then is the time for God to give thee in ſtrongeſt comforts. *Eſa.* 54. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *O thou afflicted, toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted.* Mark their eſtate. Now what will God do with a ſoul thus toſſed with a Temptation? Read the verſe before, *My Covenant of peace ſhall not depart from thee, O thou afflicted.* God doth here ſpeak moſt peace, and tenders moſt freely his Covenant in this condition, when they were moſt toſſed and troubled. And verſe 13. *Thy children ſhall be all taught of God, and great ſhall be their peace.* And verſe 14. *In righteouſneſſe thou ſhalt be eſtabliſhed, and thou ſhalt not fear.* Here you ſee how God as it were boulſters and bears up a dejected heart, *O thou toſſed with a Tempeſt, Behold, I have made a Covenant of peace with thee, and Behold, thou ſhalt not fear.* See how God keeps up the hearts of his people in this condition; when you are moſt toſſed and tumbled with the tempeſt of temptation, then doth God ordinarily ſpeak to you moſt inward peace, and ſtrongeſt aſſurance. As you know it is with an Oake, the more they are ſhaken by tempeſtuous windes, the firmer and faſter are they rooted in the bowels of the earth: It is ſo with Chriſtians; they are compared in Scripture to an Oak, whoſe fruit and ſap is in them: Now a Chriſtian, the more he is ſhaken by a tempeſtuous temptation, the Lord makes him by that to be the more firm, and to be the more faſtned and ſetled in ſtrong comforts and aſſurance.

Thirdly, when God hath any extraordinary work for his people, either to do or ſuffer, this is a time when he fills his people with moſt aſſurance. Should God put his people upon outward ſufferings, and give them inward fears, they were not in a capacity to undergoe the condition with joy or patience: and therefore when he calls his people to ſome extraordinary meaſure of ſuffering, this is the time when God will fill them with more then ordinary comforts. I have read in the book of Martyrs of Mr. *Robert Glover*, a famous man in his generation, who during the time of his impriſonment, was much

much troubled in mind for want of his aſſurance, yet the Story tells us, when he was brought to the ſtake to be burnt, as ſoon as ever he ſaw the fire, he broke out in the hearing of the people, and ſaid, He is come, he is come; I am now as full of joy as my heart can hold. All the while he was in priſon, he was blubbering and much troubled, till God brought him to an eminent ſuffering, to ſuffer death for him, and then he was full of comfort. I have read alſo of one *Adolphus Clarebachius*, who was a man ſubject to Melancholly, and lay under many doubts and fears, yet as ſoon as ever he was brought to the ſtake he openly declared to the people, I have been naturally of a ſad Temper, but now I profeſs before you all, I think there is not a merrier heart in all the World then mine is. Thus they being to go through extraordinary ſufferings, God gave them extraordinary aſſurance. Beloved, this is Gods time, when he will give you moſt aſſurance, when he cals you to moſt ſufferings. When you are to go through an Ocean of ſufferings and afflictions, the Lord will make you ſwim in a ſea of inward peace and ſpiritual joyes.

Fourthly, God gives his people moſt ſtrong aſſurance, when they walk moſt cloſely in communion with their God. *Great peace ſhall they have*, ſaith *David*, *that love thy Law*; they ſhall have peace and great peace, while they walk in love to God and his waies. Keep in communion with your God, and that's the time for God to give you greateſt comfort; If ye laſh out from God and break his Law, he will break your hearts. When the ſhepherd hath a Lamb or a ſheep that ſtraggles from the fold, it ſhall meet with a Crook, haply with the bite of a dog. It may be God may catch you with his hook, haply you ſhall be bitten with a Temptation, and bitten with deſertion, if you ſtraggle from his fold; but the more you keep in communion with God, the more likely you are to keep in your comforts; walking with God is the very fewel that kindles the fire of comfort in a Chriſtians breaſt, that keeps comfort alive. The more you flag in your communion, the more ſhall you flag in your aſſurance, and the more ſhall your comforts die. Communion with your God, it hath two particulars in it. Firſt, in keeping you free from

sin, *Iob* 11.14, 15. Secondly, in keeping the exercise of grace, *Esa.*32.17. Now, the more you keep out sin, the more you keep in comforts; the more you increase in grace, the more you increase in comforts; Grace and comfort, the one promotes the other; Grace promotes comfort, and comfort heightens you in the increase of grace: Therefore *Paul* in his salutation puts them both together, 1 *Cor.* 1. 3. And thus having finished this Query, there is onely one more, which (God willing) I shall dispatch at this time; And that is

Fifthly, Wherein appears the difference between that man that hath assurance of his effectual calling upon good ground, and between those men that only have presumptuous perswasions of their effectual calling, when they are not? Beloved, this question is worthy the discussion; and to resolve it, I shall lay down nine or ten differences; As

First, That man that hath sound and true assurance of his effectual calling, he is very careful to take heed of sin, that so he might not eclipse his comforts, or lose his assurance. He is careful (I say) to free his heart from sin as much as may be, as considering, that though he cannot sin away his soul, he may sin away his comforts; though he cannot sin away his salvation, he may sin away his consolation. A man that hath this assurance, he knowes the worth of assurance, and he knowes how soon it is lost, and how hardly it is gained; and that makes him very tender of sin, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Having these promises, let us cleanse our selves.* When a godly man knowes that God is his God, (For thats the Promise spoken of in the verse before (knowing that he belongs to God, and the Promises belong to him; he knowing this, it makes him cleanse himselfe from all filthinesse both of flesh and spirit; that he keep no sin in the spirit, nor no sin in the body. A man that hath assurance, it makes him very tender of every sin: But now, a man that hath presumptuous perswasions of his own goodnesse, his perswasions will make him more bold, and more venturous to run into sin, he will make no bones of sin, and he cares not for falling into one sin to day, and another sin to morrow, and commit wickednesse day after day; he is bold and venturous upon every sin. *Ier.*3.4, 5. *Thou hast cried*

to

to me, My Father, my Father thou art the guide of my youth; wilt thou reſerve anger for ever, and ſhal there be no end of thy indignation? Yet what ſaith God? *Yet thou didſt evil as much as thou couldſt:* As if he ſhould ſay, You cry, My Father; you perſwade your ſelves God is your Father, and yet you will ſpeak and do evil as much as you can: Here God brands them for a preſumptuous people. To perſwade your ſelves that God is your Father, and yet to do wickedneſs as much as you can, and to be drunk as often as you can, and ſwear as often as you can; alas, you deceive your own hearts in this: for God cannot be your Father in this ſenſe. And Beloved, I beſeech you in my going over theſe heads, that you would lay them to your own hearts, and ſee if you may be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe preſumptuous perſwaſions that goe over the world.

Secondly, a man that hath reall aſſurance of his effectual calling, that man meets with more aſſaults and Temptations from the devil to annoy him in his peace, then other men do that have onely a counterfeit aſſurance. As you know thoſe ſhops that have the beſt wares, and richeſt Treaſures, Goldſmiths ſhops, they are moſt expoſed to Robbery; when men will not meddle with a petty ſtall. Thoſe ſhips that are moſt richly laden, they are in the moſt danger to meet with Pirats at Sea, when your ſmaller barks laden with goods of leſſer value ſcape free: It is ſo with Chriſtians. Thoſe Chriſtians that are moſt richly laden with the Treaſure of aſſurance, that have in their hearts this precious Jewel, they are in moſt danger of the devils temptations, to be as a Pirat or Robber by force to ſet upon them, to annoy them. It is thoſe that have moſt aſſurance, that the devil doth envy moſt, that he will never let them alone, but hunts them as a Partrige over the Mountaines, by dejections, and by ſuggeſtions, and by a variety of Temptations, Satans fierieſt darts; and by diſtruſt, and by injected ſcruples, and by cavils of carnal reaſonings, and by conſulting with fleſh and blood, and for want of comfortable feelings; the devil will be ſtill putting them on, to ſee if he can damp their comforts, and make them *caſt away their confidence, which hath a great recompence of reward.* Hence it is the Apoſtle

preſſeth that Chriſtians ſhould not caſt away their confidence, (a Metaphor ſome think drawn from a Ship at Sea; Merchants, when they are at Sea, when their ſhip by a ſtorm and tempeſt is toſſed upon the billows, and likely to ſuffer ſhipwrack, being heavy laden, they will caſt away their wares, to ſave their lives. Now ſome in alluſion to this, think that the devil ſo toſſeth a poor ſoul in point of comfort, as a ſhip is toſſed upon the Sea by the wind. Now if you are toſſed upon the Sea of Temptation, and upon the waves of Trouble and Aſſaults, do not caſt away your wares, do not throw away your comforts) which implies, that godly men are often ſet upon, and often aſſaulted; that though the devil cannot bring you to hell, he would fain have you to have a hell in your conſcience while you live; he doth not only envy your happineſſe, but comforts alſo: Whereas on the contrary, men that harbour perſwaſions they are called, when they are not, the devil lulls them aſleep, he lets them alone, and never troubles them. *Luke* 11. 21. *When the ſtrong man poſſeſſeth the houſe, the goods are at peace*: That is, when the devil of hell hath whole poſſeſſion of the ſoul of a man, he is no whit tempted, his thoughts are at quiet. When the devil ſees a man build upon a ſandy and corrupt foundation, he will never ſhake that by a Temptation, leſt you ſhould by ſhaking be awakened to look after *a better and more enduring ſubſtance*. When the devil ſees you lulled aſleep in a golden dream of preſumprion, he will never awaken you by temptation, but lets you ſleep on becauſe he knows that ſleep will be a ſleep to death. As a man lying aſleep on a ſteep rock, dreams merrily of Crowns and Kingdomes, but ſuddenly ſtarting in joy, breaks his neck, and tumbles into the bottom of the Sea; ſo is it with a man that harbours ungrounded perſwaſions of his good eſtate. That which a carnal man makes his evidence that he is in a good condition, is an undoubted demonſtration he is in a bad. You ſhall have a wicked man, when he hears a godly man to be troubled in minde and wounded in ſpirit, he will tell you, he thanks God he was never troubled ſince he was born, the devil never diſturbed him, and he hath had a ſtrong faith ever ſince he can remember. Alas, Beloved, this a ſad ſigne; thou makeſt this

Heb. 10. 35.

this a ſigne of thy comfort, whereas indeed it is a demonſtration of thy want of a ſound aſſurance; for were thy aſſurance good, the Devil would never let thee alone, but would ſtill be labouring to make thee caſt away thy confidence; but being bad, he would have thee nouriſh it ſtil. We ſay thoſe Oxen that are fed in greeneſt paſtures, they are neareſt the ſlaughter; when the poor lean Oxe that hath the yoke and whip every day, and is at daily labour, is long-liv'd, and in a better condition. Thoſe men that the Devil lets alone, and never tempts, they are as the fatted Oxen never come under whip and yoke, & never are troubled; it is an argument they are near the ſlaughter, and under a great deal of danger of their ſouls: but thoſe that are under the yoke, that are often tempted, and the pricks of Satan lie upon them; this is an argument their comforts are right, and their evidence good, becauſe ſo aſſaulted and oppoſed by the Devil.

Thirdly, true aſſurance is more or leſs in a mans ſpirit, by how much more or leſs that man keeps in communion with God. If a man doth remit in his converſe with God, and grow careleſs and formal, and a ſtranger to God, he ſhall grow a ſtranger to himſelfe in the end, and to his comforts alſo: but if a man keep cloſe to God, and keep cloſe to duties, can retire and recollect himſelfe to converſe with God in a more ſolemn and ſerious manner, is preparedly and fruitfully exerciſed in Ordinances, can pour out his ſoule into Gods boſome; that man is in the way to have his comforts raiſed up. Whereas now for men that have falſe comforts and perſwaſions, whether they are much or little with God, all is one to them, their comforts are at the ſame ſtand ſtill. Come to a man that hath falſe comforts, and at all times he is alike peremptory, he is in the ſame perſwaſion he was 3. 4. 7. years ago. Ask him any week in the year, any day in the week, any hour in the day, and he will tell you he hath the ſame comforts, and the ſame evidences ſtill: he had a ſtrong faith in God, and he hath it ſtill; he had ſtrong hopes to be ſaved, and ſo he hath ſtill; he is ſtill peremptory in his comforts, though he never ſo much alter in communion with his God: this is an argument thy perſwaſions are falſe, becauſe a Chriſtians

ſtians communion and converſe with God doth feed his comforts. Now as the body, by how much the more or leſſe it is fed, by ſo much the more it is weakened or ſtrengthened: ſo it is with your comforts; ſo much as they are cheriſhed by your walking with God, ſo much they grow weak or ſtrong. Now let a wicked man grow never ſo vile, and never ſo ſinful, it interrupts not his peace; he hath hopes and aſſurance ſtill, and he will truſt in God ſtill, though he ſin ever; this is an argument his comforts are unſound. You have a lively picture of this, *Mic.* 3. 11. *The heads of the people judge for reward, the Prieſts teach for hire, and the Prophets divine for money: and yet they will lean upon the Lord, and ſay, Is not the Lord among us?* that is, though they have theſe ſins among them, and did walk thus and thus, yet they would hope in God to be ſaved for all this. Why, Beloved, thou wilt finde God to fail thee; though he never failed an aſſured Chriſtian, yet he will fail that man that leans upon him, when he belongs not to him. When thou doſt intermit walking with God, and doſt lanch forth into a gulph and ſea of luſts, and yet canſt ſtill ſay thou art the ſame in thy comforts, and the ſame in thy perſwaſions; it is an argument all thy comforts are but falſe, and thy evidence unſound.

Fourthly, Reall aſſurance of your eſtate, it doth bear up the ſoul under the greateſt outward ſorrow and ſufferings that it can meet with in this world. *Heb.* 10. 34. *They ſuffered joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in heaven a better and more enduring ſubſtance.* What made them ſo to rejoyce to ſee their houſes plundred before them, their eſtates taken from them, but this, they knew in their own ſelves, and had aſſurance in their own hearts that Chriſt was theirs, and heaven was theirs? this made them ſuffer joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods. So *Pſal.* 119. 50. *This is my comfort in affliction, that thy word doth quicken me*: That is, this bears up my heart when I am afflicted, that I have a word to build upon, that I have aſſurance, I have intereſt in a promiſe to build upon; this quickens and bears me up under my ſorrows. So *Pſal.* 119. 81. *My ſpirit had fainted within me, onely that I hoped in thy word.* That is, I had hope and confidence

fidence built upon thy Word, and that kept me from fears, and fainting, and diſcouragement under my affliction. So *Iſa.* 33. 24. *The Inhabitant ſhall not ſay, I am ſick; the people that dwell therein, ſhall be forgiven their iniquity.* * Beloved, Aſſurance will lift up and bear up the heart under all ſorrowes. Aſſurance in a Chriſtian is like oyle. Now pour oyle into a ſea or ocean of water, and the oyle will never be kept under, but ſtill be uppermoſt; ſo this oyle of comfort, and this oyle of aſſurance, it will bear thee up on the top, though thou ſhouldſt be caſt into a flood of troubles, and an ocean of ſorrowes. I have read in *Latimers* writings a notable ſaying of his to *Ridley* that famous Martyr; Sometime, ſaith he, when I live in a ſetled and ſtedfaſt aſſurance about the ſtate of my ſoul, me thinks then I am as bold as a Lion, I can laugh at all trouble, no affliction daunts me; but when I am eclipſed in my comforts, I am of ſo fearful a ſpirit, that I could run into a very mouſe-hole. Beloved, it is ſo with godly men, when they want aſſurance of their eſtate, and the ſoundneſs of their call, every affliction daunts, and every trouble ſtartles them. O but when they can live in a ſetled aſſurance of their intereſt in Chriſt, and calling by him; they are as bold as Lions and they are born up with comfort, under all the ſorrowes, and ſufferings they meet withal. But now men that have falſe perſwaſions, their perſwaſions can never bear up the heart under a trouble and a loſſe, and at a pinch; becauſe it is not a ſaving and inward comfort, it can never create inward peace. The comforts of wicked men when they come to ſuffer, they are like cloth that is ill woven: Cloth that is well made, let a man be in a ſhower of rain, it will never ſhrink; but ill woven cloth, let it be but in a ſhowre, it ſhrinks preſently: It is ſo with mens comforts; Bring comforts well wrought into a ſhowre of trouble, and that man will not ſhrink under his trouble: but bring an ill wrought and unſound aſſurance, and that will ſhrink, and fail, and pull in, and will not bear up the heart under the ſorrows and ſufferings he may meet withall. Preſuming *Pindleton*, that boaſted his fat fleſh ſhould fry in the fire before he would forſake his Religion; when he came to the trial, flagged preſently.

* The ſenſe of the pardon of their ſin ſhal take away the ſenſe of any outward ſuffering.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Sound aſſurance, where ever it is, makes the heart more humble towards God and man, and makes men more vile in their own eyes, *Gal.* 2: 20. There you have this character; *I live*, ſaith *Paul*, *by the faith of the Son of God, and Chriſt hath loved me, and given himſelfe for me.* Here is his aſſurance: what then? Doth this lift up *Paul*? No, it makes him more vile; *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*: *Paul* recollects himſelfe, I live, no; it is not I that live, but Chriſt that liveth in me. See how *Paul* was beaten off from a ſupercilious pride and exaltation of ſpirit in himſelfe. It is not I that live. The thoughts of his comforts made him recollect himſelfe, and ſeem vile in his own eyes: Whereas (alas) falſe perſwaſions puffe up the ſoul with pride, and make a man ſupercilious, and high conceited, crying out as *Iehu* did, *Ionadah, is thy heart like mine? Come ſee my zeale for the Lord*; they make him proud like *Iehu* in his falſe perſwaſions.

Sixthly, ſound comforts, and real aſſurance do engage the ſoul to walk before God in a courſe of holineſſe, *Pſal.* 16. 3. *Thy loving kindneſs is before mine eyes*; that is, I am aſſured, as if I ſaw the thing with mine eye, that Gods loving kindneſs is towards me. What then? *and I will walk in thy truth.* I will walk before thee with a holy and ſincere heart; and *I will not haunt with vain perſons*, verſe 4. And *I will waſh my hands in innocency*, ver. 6. &c. So that you ſee *David* would walk in a courſe of holineſs, becauſe he had an evidence and aſſurance of Gods love to him. So 1 *Iohn* 3. 3. *He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelfe even as Chriſt is pure*; that is, a man that doth nouriſh hopes and perſwaſions of heaven, his hopes will make him a Chriſtian endeavouring to purifie his owne heart, and to be holy as Chriſt is holy. This is the nature of true aſſurance. But now for falſe aſſurance, the man that hath it, doth not look after holineſs at all; he thinks himſelf well enough, that he hath attained that which every wiſe man ſhould reſt in, without medling any further; nay, he is ſo far from laying bonds upon himſelf to walk in a courſe of holineſs, that he will rather take encouragement from thence to walk in a way of looſeneſs and profaneneſſe: Becauſe grace abounds,

bounds, he will abound in ſin, this is the ill uſe that falſe comfort makes of Gods grace. And therefore, Beloved, look over your hearts. Do the comforts you pretend to have, and the aſſurance you pretend to enjoy, make you more to purſue holineſs? that you can ſay as *David* did, *I ſee thy loving kindneſs is before me*, and therefore *I will love thy wayes, and hate ſinfulneſs*; or can you ſay, you have comforts, therefore you will run into ſin, and wallow in wickedneſs? this is an argument thy comforts are not true.

Seventhly, True aſſurance, it is got and kept with a great deal of diligence and induſtry. Your beſt things are hardeſt to get, and hardeſt to keep. Stones are to be had in every place; but gold you muſt dig deep, and take paines to dive into the bowels of the earth, before you can get that. Weeds grow eaſily, but your fine garden-flowers, they muſt be often watered and carefully looked unto, or elſe they will not grow: Beloved, this weed of falſe perſwaſion and aſſurance, it is a weed that will grow under every hedge, and thrive in every garden without looking after; whereas alas, the flower of true comforts and ſaving aſſurance, it is hard to make it grow; and when it is grown, it is hard to keep it from withering and blaſting. Aſſurance, it coſts a man the waiting many a year, the ſhedding many a teare, the making of many a prayer, before he can get or keep it; whereas alas, falſe aſſurance it is eaſily gotten, and eaſily kept. A man may get preſumption without any pains at all; the Devil will egge you on both to get and to keep it: Therefore you that eaſily get your comforts without prayers, and keep your comforts without pains, you may be ſure your comforts are but falſe.

Eighthly, True aſſurance it is gotten by the Word, and grounded upon the Word. It is got by the Word, *Iſa.* 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace, to them that are nigh and to them that are afar off.* The fruit of the lips, that is, the fruit of the Miniſters preaching; the word which falls from the lips of a godly Miniſter, God hath ordained and created that to be the way to work and create peace, peace; that is, a ſound peace in the hearts of his people. And it is

not onely got, but it is bottomed upon the Word also. It is the Word, and somewhat in the Word, that bears up the hearts of the people of God, *Psal.* 119. 49. *Good is the word of the Lord, wherein thou hast caused thy servant to hope.* So ver. 50, 51. It is the Word of God that bottoms the comforts of the people of God; whereas look now upon the wicked men, and they neither got their comforts by the Word, nor do they ground upon the Word; but first, they have had strong hopes in God ever since they could remember; and secondly, they keep and ground them either upon their good meaning, that they mean well towards God; or else thirdly, they ground them upon this, that they are not so bad as other men are. A poor weak ground. The Pharisee could say so; *I am no extortioner, no drunkard, no adulterer, and the like*: yet never came to heaven for all this. Or else fourthly, they ground their comforts on this, because they receive from God abundance of outward mercies. And this you finde was their ground of presumption, *Hos.* 12. 8. *Ephraim said, I am become rich, and I have found me out substance; in all my labour they shall finde no iniquity in me, that is, sin. Ephraim* would say, I am become rich, and have gotten me an estate, and now I am an honest man, and they shall finde no sin in me: yet this was a meer presumption, because God tels us, *Eccl.* 9. 1. *No man knows either love or hatred by the things that are before him.* And *sometimes*, saith *Solomon*, *God gives men riches to their hurt*; And therefore this can be no evidence of a grounded assurance.

Ninthly, That man that hath a good assurance, he is willing to be tried either by God or men, touching the truth of his assurance. This you finde, *Psal.* 26. 2, 3. *Try me, O Lord, examine me, prove me; and try my reines, and my heart, for thy loving kindness is before me.* As if he should say, Lord, I make a profession, that I have thy loving kindness in mine eye, that I am assured thou lovest me; Lord, I put my soul upon the trial: Doe thou try me, if my heart be not right in my assurance. And not by God onely, but they are willing to be tryed by man also. And therefore you have that phrase of the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. *that when men ask you an account of the hope that is*

in you, you ſhould be ready to give anſwer; that is, when men ask you what hopes you have of heaven, and upon what ground do you hope to be ſaved? the Apoſtle ſaith, you ſhould be ready to give anſwer of that hope that is in you. And who were they that ſhould do ſo? they were thoſe that *had a good conſcience*, thoſe men that had conſciences free from ſin, and had evidence in their own conſciences, that they belonged to God, they were ready, whoſoever asked them, to give a reaſon why they hoped for heaven. Whereas a man that hath falſe perſwaſions of heaven and of his effectual calling, that man cannot endure to be tried either by God or man. He is like the man that hath ſtollen goods in his honſe. A man that is an honeſt man, let the Conſtable come, let ſearch be made, it never troubles him, becauſe they are his own goods that he hath bought with his own money: but the Thief, when the Conſtable comes, and ſearch is made, every Trunk that is opened, his heart trembles: It is ſo with an unſound-hearted man, a man that hath falſe aſſurance, leſt there ſhould be a flaw found in it. Come to a man that hath falſe perſwaſions, (as to you Formaliſts, and to thoſe that are preſumptuous wretches) come to theſe men, and put this queſtion to them, Upon what ground do you hope for ſalvation? What evidence can you give of your effectual calling? How can you make out upon Scripture-grounds, that you ſhall go to heaven? Such queſtions as theſe will puzzle an unſound heart, that he cannot give you any reaſonable anſwer at all. And herein the difference is palpable between a grounded aſſurance and thoſe falſe perſwaſions that wicked men have.

Tenthly, True aſſurance, whereever it is, it makes a man ſo to value the comforts of the Spirit of God, that he doth undervalue all other comforts in the world in compariſon of them, *Pſal.* 4. 6. *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me*, what then? *and this ſhall more glad my heart, then when my corn and wine and oyle increaſeth.* Beloved, aſſurance it doth ſo tranſport and raiſe up the heart, that it makes all things in the world, all comforts here below to be nothing in compariſon of that. The favour of Princes is nothing to that man that hath the favour of God; Life, and all the comforts of life, are no-

thing to that man that hath comfort in reference to his eternall life: *Psal.* 63. 3. *Thy loving kindnes, O Lord, is better then life.* *David* did not value his life, nor all the comforts of it, so as he valued the loving kindnes of his God. But now a man that hath false perswasions, these do not so transport his spirit, and take up the whole man, and fill the soul *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*; these do no whit abate his comforts in the world. A man you know that hath tasted hony, other things are of an unpleasant taste to him that are eaten after: Beloved, assurance is like hony; nothing so sweet to a godly palate as that is. Now when a godly person tasts of the hony of assurance, all other outward comforts, they are but as gall and wormwood, things unpleasant to his tast and palate. And thus you see I have laid down ten particulars to you: I would entreat you to distinguish in your own hearts, whether you are a people that have a true assurance, or onely false perswasions of your effectual calling. And let me tell you, the reason why I speak of this, is, because the most of men in the world do miss of heaven by false perswasions. Where desperation damnes one soul, presumption damnes a thousand. I might say of this, as it was sung in the Triumphant song of *David* and *Saul*, *Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands*: So I might say, desperation hath slain a thousand, but presumption ten thousand. Thousands and ten thousands are slain and undone for ever, by harbouring presumptuous and groundless perswasions of their effectual calling, when they are not.

SERMON

Sermon X.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

THE Doctrine I am yet upon, drawn from theſe words is this, *That Chriſtians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſouls, that they are effectually called by Ieſus Chriſt.* In the proſecution of which I have handled many particulars: I now come in the cloſe of this Point to make a particular uſe of all that hath been ſaid, and paſs on to that other branch, *to make your Election ſure.* And the Uſe I ſhall ſpeak of, ſhall only be an Uſe of Exhortation, and Direction. My Exhortation ſhall be directed to two ſorts of men. Firſt, to them that do enjoy and are aſſured of their effectual Calling; who are called, and are aſſured they are ſo. Secondly, to them that have ſometime enjoyed this aſſurance, but now have loſt or eclipſed the comfortable feeling of their aſſurance. Into theſe two heads I ſhall branch my diſcourſe.

And firſt, the exhortation or counſel I am to give, is to them that are aſſured of their effectual calling, and have done the work the Apoſtle here injoynes them; that *have made ſure their Vocation*, and by unqueſtionable evidence can ſay ſo. And theſe I would adviſe to three particular duties.

Firſt, you ſhould be directed rightly to uſe your aſſurance.

Secondly, Carefully to preſerve your aſſurance.

Thirdly, Daily to improve your aſſurance. This is the threefold task that lies upon you that enjoy this rich Jewel of aſſurance.

Firſt,

First, You are to take care, that you rightly uſe and manage your aſſurance. A thing hardly gotten, if it be not well managed, a man may enjoy it in a way of loſſe to himſelfe. To uſe aſſurance well is the great Art of a Chriſtian. And here (that I might ſpeak diſtinctly to this direction) I ſhall lay down eight particulars, as concomitants, or gracious qualifications, which muſt accompany you in a condition of aſſurance; As

First, You muſt uſe and manage your aſſurance with humility, in caſe you uſe it well. Aſſured Chriſtians muſt be humble Chriſtians. The more high you are in comforts, the more low you ſhould be in ſpirit. You know the fulleſt eares of corn hang down their head loweſt, when light and flaſhy darnel that hath nothing of worth in it, lifts up its head on high. Aſſured Chriſtians, they are like your full and ripe eares of corn; the more full they are of this fruit of the Spirit, aſſurance, the more low do they, and ſhould they hang down their heads. It is your empty barrels make a noiſe, when your full veſſels though you ſtrike them, will not ſound: It is thoſe Chriſtians that are moſt empty of faith, and moſt empty of aſſurance, that make the moſt noiſe, and are moſt proud of their gifts and graces; when your aſſured Chriſtians they are like veſſels full of the beſt liquor, and make the leaſt noiſe. The fuller God hath filled you with this comfort, the more you ſhould ſhine forth in humility. As *Paul* when he ſaith, *Chriſt loved him, and gave himſelf for him*; when he was moſt full of comforts, he was moſt filled with humility, and ſaid, *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me.*

Secondly, You muſt manage your aſſurance with a high valuation of the comforts of God in you. A man that hath received a benefit, if he do not value it, it is a provocation to the man that gave it, either to repent of his gift, or take it away. *David* when he had aſſurance, marke how he values it: *Pſal.* 63. 3. *Thy loving kindneſs is better then life.* He valued the comforts of his God, and the ſhinings of Gods countenance better then life. And *Pſal.* 4. 6. *Lift thou the light of thy countenance upon me, and that ſhall more glad me, then when my corn and wine and oyle increaſeth. David* would more value the comforts of Gods

Gods Spirit, then any other comfort in the world. Aſſured Chriſtians, that uſe aſſurance rightly, they muſt put a high valuation and worth upon it. And the reaſon is, Becauſe you will not then eaſily part with your aſſurance for a baſe and beggerly luſt, and for a fruitleſs ſin, if once you know the value and worth of it.

Thirdly, Your aſſurance muſt make you to live with a weaned heart from the comforts of this world, 2 *Cor.* 4. the laſt verſe, compared with Chapt. 5. 1. The Apoſtle tells you, *We do not look after things that are ſeen, that are temporal.* What made the Apoſtle not to look after worldly things? he gives the reaſon, *For when this houſe of ours is diſſolved, we have a dwelling with God, eternal in the heavens.* As if he ſhould ſay, That's the reaſon we do not look after the world as worldly men do; for we know that when we leave this world, we have a heaven to go to. The aſſurance of the bleſſedneſs of their future being, did make them undervalve the world, as a thing not worthy the glance of the eye; Perſons that have aſſurance, can ſay as *Philip* ſaid to Chriſt, *Iohn* 14. 8. *Shew us*, ſaith *Philip, the Father, and it ſufficeth us.* Thus ſaith a gracious heart, O ſweet Jeſus, ſhew us but thy favour; aſſure but my ſoul, that thy Father is a reconciled Father to me in thy ſelfe, that he is my Father as well as thy Father; Shew me but the Father, and it ſufficeth me; though I have little or nothing in the world, this ſhall ſuffice me. Gracious hearts, that live in the enjoyment of aſſurance, they ought to live with a weaned heart from the comforts of this world. Men that have taſted hony or ſome other ſweet morſel, they do diſtaſte all other things, though of themſelves very pleaſant: So men that have taſted of this hony of Gods love, and the ſweetneſſe of this grace of aſſurance; it will make them diſtaſte and diſreliſh all the things of this world, though of themſelves pleaſant and good. If a man look on the Sun it dazles his eyes, that he cannot diſcern colours about him; ſo he that beholds the light of Gods countenance, will not look upon the things here below. I may allude to that place, *Luke* 5. 39. *No man*, ſaith Chriſt, *having drunk old wine, ſtraight way deſireth new; for he ſaith the old is better.* His meaning is this, No man that hath had a taſt of Jeſus Chriſt,

Chriſt, and hath had communion and fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt, and lain under the Miniſtery of Jeſus Chriſt; no man that hath drunk of this old wine, will ſay new is better; to have other comforts, and other pleaſures, is better; no man will ſay this, ſaith Chriſt. And ſo he compares his Miniſtery, and his Doctrine, and the comfort Gods people have thereby, to old wine: Beloved, ſo I ſay, men that have drunk draughts of this wine of conſolation, and men that are ſetledly aſſured, and have had a *taſt that the Lord is gracious*, no man will now ſay, that the world is better, and the comforts below better. No, the aſſurance of Gods love ſhould wean a mans heart from all the comforts of the world. As old *Iacob* ſaid, when he ſaw his ſonne *Ioſeph* in his old age, after he had made many a prayer, and ſhed many a tear; *O Ioſeph my ſonne is yet alive, I have enough.* As was the carriage of *Iacob* to *Ioſeph*, the ſame ſhould be the carriage of a Chriſtian towards Chriſt. If he can ſay, My *Joſeph*, my Jeſus is alive in my heart; I having him, have enough; this comfort ſhould raviſh his ſpirit. *Paul* when he was rapt up into the third heaven, was ſo tranſported that he knew not whether he was in the body or no; ſo are the people of God raviſhed with heavenly conſolations, that they minde not theſe earthly things. It is a ſpeech that *Bernard* hath, That to whomſoever Jeſus Chriſt once becomes ſweet, that he can taſte the ſweetneſs of his love, and the ſweetneſs of his mercy, the ſweetneſs in Chriſts love will imbitter the world unto him.

ucipit dulce Chriſtus, ſe eſt acere mundo.

Fourthly, you are to manage and uſe your aſſurance with tenderneſs of conſcience againſt ſin. Aſſured Chriſtians ſhould be tender-conſcienced Chriſtians. *Pſal.* 85. 8. *God will ſpeak peace to his people*; but mark the duty: *they muſt not turn again unto folly.* They muſt not run again into ſin, they muſt be tender of ſin, and then God will ſpeak peace to his people. Sin (as I once told you) will be like wind in the bowels of the earth. Philoſophers ſay, Earth-quakes and ruptures are occaſioned by winde got into the bowels and cavernes of the earth, which having no place for vent, it overturns Mountains and Buildings: Beloved, ſin in the heart will do the like; it will make the heart quake and tremble if it be there;

it wil prove the grave of thy comforts, and the reſurrection of thy fears. Therefore Chriſtians that are aſſured, they muſt take heed of ſin; if they would keep their comforts, they muſt keep their hearts that ſin get not into their conſciences. Beloved, they that are aſſured Chriſtians, they know how difficultly they did attain this aſſurance, and they know how ſweetly they enjoy this aſſurance, and that will make them very tender, that they do not loſe a thing ſo hardly gotten and [illegible] ly enjoyed for a trivial luſt; that they loſe not their forme[illegible] dences, and revive former terrors.

Fifthly, Aſſurance muſt be managed with patience in bearing any outward affliction that you may meet with in the world. Aſſured Chriſtians muſt be patient Chriſtians, *Heb.* 10. 34. *They ſuffered joyfully the ſpoyling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better and more enduring ſubſtance*; and that made the Saints of God tuſh and ſcorn at all the loſſes they met with in the world. Suppoſe a man be at Sea, and have precious Jewels and Pearls aboard with him; if the man can be but ſure he ſhall ſave his own life, and ſave his Jewels, though he loſe the Caske, though he loſe the box, that will not much trouble him: Thou that art ſure of heaven, thou canſt never loſe that Pearle, thy ſoul; thou maieſt loſe the ſtell, thy life; thou maiſt loſe the Casket, thou ſhalt never loſe the Jewel; and ſhall that trouble thee? If thou art an aſſured Chriſtian, be ſure what ever ſtorme of Temptation blow upon thee, thou ſhalt onely loſe the box, never loſe the Pearle. This therefore ſhould make aſſured Chriſtians to be patient Chriſtians, what ever they ſhall undergoe here in the world. I have read a ſtory in *Fox* his Acts and Monuments, of a woman, who when ſhe came to be tried for her Religion before *Bonner* that bloody Biſhop, he threatned her he would take away her husband from her; ſaith ſhe, Chriſt is my husband: I will take away thy childe; Chriſt, ſaith ſhe, is better to me then ten ſonnes: I will ſtrip thee, ſaith he, of all thy outward comforts; yea but Chriſt is mine, and you cannot ſtrip me of him, ſaith ſhe. The thoughts of this bore up the womans heart, ſpoile her of all, and take away all, yet Chriſt was hers, and they could not take him away. O Beloved,

when thy ſoul lives in the aſſurance of Gods love, and of thy calling to grace and glory; this ſhall make you wonderful patient to endure whatever ye ſhall meet with here below. It was the ſpeech of that famous ſervant of God, holy *Bradford*, when a company of his fellow-priſoners were that morning to go to be burnt, ſaith *Bradford*, O my fellow-ſufferers, be cheerful, for though we are all of us to have a [illegible] breakfaſt, yet truly we ſhall have a cheerful dinner. Here [illegible] how aſſured Chriſtians, their comforts in God did ſo [illegible]ort their hearts, that it made them overlook, and with patience bear all afflictions they were to meet with. You have a remarkable phraſe, *Iſa.* 33. 34. *The Inhabitants of Sion ſhall not ſay, I am ſick, the people that dwel therein ſhall be forgiven their iniquity.* A ſtrange paſſage; he doth not ſay, they were not ſick, but the Text ſaith, they ſhould not ſay ſo. And what's the reaſon? why ſhould the people forget their ſorrows, and forget their pains? this ſhould make them, the Lord had forgiven them their iniquities. The ſenſe of pardon tooke away the ſenſe of pain. And Beloved, Chriſtians ſhould walk thus to ſhew that trouble ſhould not daunt them, and afflictions never ſtartle them; you that are aſſured Chriſtians, you ſhould be patient Chriſtians under all ſufferings. And take this for a rule, that God takes impatience more unkindly at aſſured Chriſtians hands, then at the hands of any men in the world beſides: Becauſe if God give the aſſurance, he hath given thee a ſeal in thy own breaſt, that al ſhal work for thy good; and wilt thou be impatient? he hath given thee a ſeal in thy own breaſt, that heaven ſhall make amends for all; and wilt thou be angry? God will take this more unkindly at them then any.

Sixthly, aſſurance ſhould be managed with indeared love to Jeſus Chriſt. Aſſured Chriſtians ſhould be Chriſt-loving Chriſtians: When Chriſt told *Mary Magdalen, Thy ſins which are many are forgiven thee:* When ſhe had aſſurance her ſins were pardoned, what ſaith Chriſt? *Much was forgiven her, therefore ſhe loved much:* becauſe ſhe was ſenſible much was forgiven her, ſhe would ſhew forth much love to Jeſus Chriſt. And the reaſon is, becauſe it was Chriſts love brought thoſe Chriſtians

ſtians into a ſtate of ſalvation, and his love likewiſe that gave them aſſurance of their own call, and this ſhould indear their hearts to Jeſus Chriſt.

Seventhly, aſſurance ſhould be managed with abundance of compaſſion towards thoſe Chriſtians that are tempted and troubled by Satan. Aſſured Chriſtians ſhould be compaſſionate Chriſtians. If God have given you aſſurance of his love, you ſnould carry compaſſionate breaſts towards your Brethren, who remain behind in great diſtreſs and perplexity, that lie toſſed and turmoiled by temptations. When a ſhip is brought ſafe to the Haven, if they have any bowels, when they ſee another ſhip in the main Ocean ſtrugling for life in the midſt of the waters, they will pitty them: You that have got aſſurance, you are come to a ſafe harbour; but your tempted brethren, they are toſſed upon the waves and tempeſts of temptation, you ſhould now have a compaſſionate heart towards tempted Chriſtians. 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. The Apoſtle tels us, *The Lord hath comforted us in all our tribulation, that we might comfort others with the ſame comforts wherewith we our ſelves are comforted of God,* It was the work and task of the Apoſtle, and them with him, that they having comforts and aſſurance from God, they would labour to comfort others, and bear up others, and eſtabliſh others, that they might rejoyce, and receive the ſame comforts with themſelves. Hence you read, 1 *Pet.* 3. 8, 9. *Be pitiful, be compaſſionate to your Brethren, love as Brethren.* Now upon what ground doth the Apoſtle preſs this compaſſion? Read verſe 9. *Knowing,* ſaith he, *that as you are hereunto called, that you ſhould inherit a bleſſing.* As if he ſhould ſay, upon this ground I woo you to be compaſſionate, becauſe you are called to inherit a bleſſing; that is, you know and are aſſured that you are a bleſſed people, and you ſhall be a ſaved people, therefore have compaſſion on your brethren who are tempted and troubled, that you might bring them to the ſame pitch of comfort you are brought to.

Eighthly, Aſſurance ſhould be managed with cheerfulneſs of heart: Aſſured Chriſtians ſhould be cheerful Chriſtians. We read *Nehem.* 2. 1, 2. That *Nehemiah* all the while he was

before the face of the King, and in the preſence of the King, the Text ſaith, *Nehemiah for a long time was not ſad*: the Kings preſence did ſo cheer up *Nehemiahs* heart. Now to this I would allude; If the preſence and face of King *Artaxerxes* did make *Nehemiah* that for a long time he was not ſad before him; Oh how much more ſhould the face of God, and the preſence of God in a mans ſoul, and the favour of God towards a man, how much more ſhould this keep thee from being ſad in Gods preſence, from a lumpiſh and melancholy and ſad ſpirit? thou art in the preſence of a King, in the favour of God, and this ſhould keep thee from being ſad and heavy. None in the world have greater grounds of joy then thoſe that live in a conſtant aſſurance of the love of God towards them. Its for condemned men, that are condemned to the gallows, to hang down their heads and wring their hands; but let the pardoned people of the Lord rejoyce. The man that is condemned, he hangs down his head; but the man that comes pardoned from the bar, with what a cheerful countenance will that man come? You are all a people pardoned by your God, you may well be a rejoycing people. I remember a paſſage I have read in D. *Halls* Works, in his Meditation upon the Creatures, ſpeaking of a little Bird called Robbin-red-breſt, that when he was in his ſtudy, came chirping at the window, and leaping upon his book, and ſinging a great while together; upon this ſight he breaks out into this contemplation; O this little ſilly Bird, that doth not know where to pick up the next crumb, that doth not know where to pitch and reſt it ſelfe for the next night, yet behold, how cheerfully doth this Bird ſing; when man, and a Chriſtian man, that knows God to be his Father, that hath not only crumbs of outward bleſſings, but whole morſels of inward comfort, and can drink draughts of inward conſolation; Chriſtians that have a God, and a heaven, that have Chriſt and glory, yet they cannot be merry, as a poor Bird can be: and truly it is a good Meditation. Many times people that are called by Jeſus Chriſt, and have ground and aſſurance of their everlaſting happineſſe by him, yet they cannot be ſo merry as a poor Bird will be. Birds in the morning will be chirping

ping and ſinging, as if nothing lay at the heart, when a Chriſtian is ſad and vexing, and wearying out his life in diſcontents and ſorrows; this becomes not a Chriſtian. Aſſured Chriſtians they ſhould be cheerful Chriſtians.

Ninthly, Aſſured Chriſtians they ſhould be thankful Chriſtians. For one to give a man a promiſe, it is worth thanks, but when a man ſhall not onely give, but aſſure that promiſe that he will make it good, that is more thanks-worthy. Beloved, if God had only promiſed you a heaven, and had given no aſſurance, it was thanks-worthy; but when God ſhall give thee his Broad Seal, that ſhall ſeal thee up to the day of Redemption, and when God ſhall give thee an aſſurance in thy own breaſt thou ſhalt go to heaven, and go to God, this ſhould much more make thee in thy ſpirit bleſs thy God. It is a ſpeech of the Prophet *David*, *My ſoul, bleſs thou the Lord for his marvellous loving kindneſs.* Thou haſt kindneſs, and thou haſt marvellous loving kindneſs; My ſoul, bleſs God for this. *David* would not keep back Gods praiſes, ſeeing God would not keep back *Davids* comforts. In heaven we ſhall break forth into admiration, becauſe we have good things in poſſeſſion; here we ſhould break forth into thankſgiving, becauſe we have them in expectation. And thus I have done with the firſt part of my direction to you that are aſſured Chriſtians, you ſhould labour firſt rightly to uſe your aſſurance.

Secondly, All you that are aſſured Chriſtians, you are to be directed carefully to keep and preſerve your aſſurance. There is no leſs skil, ſaith the Poet, note to be put forth in keeping vertue, then in getting of it. It is ſaid of *Hannibal*, he was a skilful Souldier to get Victories, but he had no skill to keep them when gotten: It may be ſaid ſo of us, Chriſtians can get aſſurance, but they have not the skill to keep it when they have got it. This therefore I am now to preſs, that you would be careful to preſerve your aſſurance. And here in ſpeaking of this, I ſhall lay down two particulars; that in caſe you would keep your aſſurance, there are ſome things you muſt do, and ſome things you muſt avoid and take heed of.

Non minor eſt virtus quàm quærere parta tueri.

First,

First, There are ſome things you muſt do, and thoſe I ſhall comprize under two or three heads.

First, in caſe you would keep aſſurance, you are to keep cloſe in communion with your God, in the exerciſe of the duty of godlineſs. The more you keep grace the more you will keep your comforts. And here that I may branch out this direction, I ſhall comprize theſe duties under four heads, and ſhew you from Scripture, that keeping cloſe to God in the uſe of four duties, will be a ready way to keep your aſſurance in you.

As firſt, keep cloſe to God in the duty of prayer, *Joh.* 16.24. *Ask*, ſaith Chriſt, *and your joy ſhall be ful.* Ask, that your joy may be ful; implying that if you keep cloſe to God in the duty of prayer, after aſſurance, your ſpirits ſhall be complete and full.

Secondly, keep cloſe to God in the duty of reading the Word often. By often reading the Word you ſhall often meet with Promiſes and Supports for your comfort. That's the reaſon men leſſen in comforts, becauſe men do not frequently read the Word; you cannot read a Chapter, but you will find there a prop for faith, and a prop for aſſurance. Keep conſtant to the Word, and that's the way to keep your aſſurance, 1 *Iohn* 5. 13. *Theſe things have I written to you that believe, that you might know that you have eternal life.* Theſe things have I writ, not only that you may have life, but that you might know it. By reading the writings of *Iohn Iohn* tells them they might the better know they ſhould live for ever, and everlaſtingly be ſaved. Keep cloſe to God in reading his written Word, and this will be of great uſe. Becauſe there are promiſes ſcattered throughout the veins of Scripture: not a Scripture almoſt you can read, but there is a promiſe or ſupport for your faith one way or other.

Thirdly, Keep cloſe to God in a conſtant and conſciencious hearing of his Word, and this is a great means to get aſſurance, *Luk.* 1.76. *Thou ſhalt be called the Prophet of the Higheſt, for thou ſhalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his way*; that is, thou ſhalt go to prepare the peoples hearts that they may receive Jeſus Chriſt that follows after. This is ſpoken of

Iohn

John Baptiſt. And what was the effect of hearing *John* preach? *To give knowledge of ſalvation to his people, for the remiſſion of their ſins*; not onely to give them ſalvation, but to give them knowledge and aſſurance of this ſalvation. O live under the Miniſtery, and under *John Baptiſts* Miniſtery, that preacheth repentance and humiliation, and that is the Miniſtery will give moſt aſſurance of your ſalvation.

Fourthly, Keep in communion with God, in a daily trying and examining your own hearts, *Gal. 6. 4. If any man think himſelf to be ſomewhat, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himſelf; but let every man prove his own work, and then he ſhall have rejoycing in himſelf.* That is, let a man examine himſelf, and prove his heart, and this will be a means to work joy in the heart, that they ſhall have comfort and joy in themſelves in the aſſurance of their happineſs. Beloved, what's the reaſon you do not keep aſſurance? the reaſon is, you keep not cloſe to God in a way of communion in theſe duties of holineſs, you keep not to God in a way of prayer, and reading, and examining your hearts, and proving your comforts, and your own eſtate, and that's the reaſon you are no more full, and no more firm.

Secondly, if you would keep your comforts, keep your conſcience clear from harbouring the guilt of ſinne, *Iob* 11. 14, 15. *If iniquity be in thy hands, put it far away*; if ſin be in thy converſation, away with it. Let not ſin be in thy heart, nor in thy houſe, *then ſhalt thou lift up thy face to God without ſpot, thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt before him, and not fear.* This will ballance thy ſpirit, and keep thy heart from fear, and keep thee in a ſtedfaſt aſſurance, if thou keep thy conſcience clear.

Thirdly, if thou wouldſt keep aſſurance, gather and heap together all the experiences thou haſt had of God in thy heart in times paſt. *I called to remembrance the daies of old, Pſal. 77. 7.* Call to remembrance all the experiences thou haſt had of God, and had of Chriſt, and of thy own grace, and the fruits of Gods Spirit in thy own ſoul, and this will wonderfully keep up thy aſſurance. *Rom.* 5. 4. The Apoſtle tels us, *Experience worketh hope.* The more experimental you are, and the more

you

you gather experience together, the more you ſtrengthen hope, and the more hope is ſtrengthened, the more aſſurance is gained. Theſe are the particulars you muſt practiſe, in caſe you would preſerve in your breaſts this aſſurance of your effectual calling.

Secondly, there are ſome things you are to avoid and take heed of, in caſe you would perpetuate aſſurance in your hearts, and thoſe I ſhall comprife under ſix heads.

Firſt, take heed you do not wallow in, and give your ſelves to ſenſual joy and pleaſure. There is nothing in the world will more eat out ſpiritual joy and that effectual aſſurance in your hearts, then giving your ſelves too much to carnal joy and ſenſual pleaſure, which takes away the heart. The more your joy runs in that channel after ſenſual pleaſure, the leſs it runs towards God, and the comforts that are above; godly ſorrow is the ſeed-plot of ſpiritual joy.

Secondly, The evil of earthly-mindedneſs, take heed of that, if ever you would keep your comforts. There is nothing in the world will more blaſt your comforts, then an earthly mind, to be ſtill poring upon the things of the world. What the Philoſophers ſay of the Eclipſe of the Sun, that it is occaſioned by the intervening of the Moon between the Sun and our ſight, is true in this caſe: The moon is an Embleme of the world; If the world get between Chriſt *the Sun of righteouſneſs* and our ſight, it will darken our ſight of Jeſus Chriſt, and bring Eclipſes upon our comforts and graces. Thoſe men that dig deep into the bowels of the earth, they are oftentimes choked and ſtifled by damps that come from the earth: ſo it is with Chriſtians, thoſe that wil be ever poring and digging about the things of this world, it is a thouſand to one if from worldly things a damp doth not ariſe to ſmother their comforts, and quench their graces; the world pierceth with ſorrow, therefore muſt needs damp your joyes. A candle, though it may ſhine to the view of all, yet put it but under ground, and (though there be not a puff of wind) the very damps will ſtifle the light of the flame. Beloved, though you ſhine like candles in your comforts, yet bring them but under the earth, and a clod of earth will ſtifle your

your candle, will dampe your comforts. There is nothing lays a Chriſtian under more loſs in his aſſurance then worldly-mindedneſs.

Thirdly, avoid remiſſeneſs in Religious duties. If you ſlack in duties, you will ſlack in comforts; leſs duties and leſs comforts go together. If a man doth let looſe the tacklings of his ſhip, and let ſlack the ſailes, that ſhip cannot goe with ſo ſwift a motion; ſpecially if wind and tide be againſt it, the ſhip muſt needs go backward: Believers they are aſſured Chriſtians, they are like a ſhip under ſail; you go againſt wind and tide, againſt nature, and againſt corruption, againſt temptation and the devil and all: now if you let ſlack your ſails, and grow remiſs in duties, you will quickly ſlack in your comforts; whatever weakens your graces, and ſtraitens your duties, will impaire your aſſurances, and eclipſe your comforts; and therefore take heed of remiſſeneſs in a way of duties; oh do not leſs work when you have moſt encouragement.

Fourthly, Take heed of ſpiritual pride. If once you begin to admire your ſelves, then you loſe your ſelves. If once you are proud of your graces, it is a provocation to make God take away your comforts, and to make you loſe your graces; I mean, loſe them, not in the very being, but in the comfort and excerciſe of them; pride is the great murderer of a Chriſtians comforts.

Fifthly, Take heed of grieving the ſpirit of God; *Grieve not the holy ſpirit*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *whereby you are ſealed to the day of Redemption.* The Spirit of God is a ſealing Spirit; O grieve not this Spirit. The Spirit deales with us, as we deale with it; if we grieve the ſpirit of God, God will grieve you, and your ſpirits ſhall be grieved, that you ſhall not keep the joyes of the Lord in your breaſt in the aſſurance of his love and favour to you. You read *Iſa.* 63. 10. *They grieved his Spirit, ſo he was turned to be their enemy, & fought againſt them.* Beloved, though God may be your friend, yet he will frown upon you as an enemy, and ſeem to fight againſt you too, in caſe you grieve his Spirit; if you grieve Gods Spirit, God will grieve thine; and when thy ſpirit is grieved, thou muſt needs loſe thy comforts.

Sixthly, Take heed of the ſin of hypocriſie, falſe grace will breed a falſe joy. Falſe hearts muſt needs have falſe comforts. You will never keep true comforts, if you have an unſound heart, *The upright in heart they ſhall ſhout upon their beds for joy*; they ſhall do it, but hypocrites ſhall not. Take heed therefore of this evil, and you are in a way to preſerve your aſſurance.

SERMON XI.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

THE Doctrine I am yet upon is this, *That Chriſtians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſoules, that they are effectually called by Ieſus Chriſt.* In the managing of which I came to an uſe of direction, to thoſe who are aſſured of their effectual calling, and to them I gave three directions. Firſt, That you would rightly manage your aſſurance. Secondly, Carefully preſerve your aſſurance. Thirdly, Daily improve your aſſurance; the laſt of which I have yet to handle. And touching this third direction, daily to improve your aſſurance, I ſhall give you but three heads; which if you make uſe of, you may every day improve your aſſurance, and bring it from a little to a great meaſure. As

Firſt, In caſe you would doe this, improve your graces. The more you increaſe in grace, the more you will grow in comfort.

comfort. Grace and comfort, they are two Twins, that the more one growes, the better the other thrives. Hence you read, that in the ſalutation of every Epiſtle, the Apoſtle puts both together, *Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to you in Chriſt Ieſus*, 1 Cor. 3. There the Apoſtle makes the multiplying of grace to be the multiplying of peace. The more you multiply and grow in grace, the more you will increaſe peace, inward peace of conſcience: they are both joyned together. You have a paſſage, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 11. compared together, *Adde to your faith vertue, &c.* The Apoſtle there urgeth our diligence to adde grace to grace; that is, to live in the improvement of grace. And what will follow? ver. 11. *If you doe theſe things, you ſhall never fall; for ſo an entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly into the everlaſting Kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.* You ſhall not only go to heaven, but you ſhall have an abundant entrance miniſtred before you come there; you ſhall have abundance of aſſurance and inward peace before you come there. And here to give you a more particular direction, there are theſe foure graces chiefly you are to improve.

Firſt, Improve the grace of humility, *Iſa.* 57. 15. The Lord doth promiſe there *to revive the ſpirit of the humble.* It is a particular promiſe to that grace, that God will revive you, and give you a new life if you have it. And reviving there is not meant of the firſt life of grace, but of a life of comfort. They had grace before, but God would give them a life of comfort; he will reſtore your conſolation to you in caſe you are an humble people. Hence it is, *Iam.* 4. 6. *The Lord gives grace to the humble.* Yea, *he gives more grace.* The Lord gives more grace to the humble perſon then to any man in the world. Now the more grace you have, the more comfort you muſt needs have. Humility is a foundation of more grace, therefore needs muſt be a foundation of more comfort.

That building whoſe foundation is laid loweſt, is of all the moſt beautiful and comely Fabrick above ground: So thoſe Chriſtians that lay a foundation low in humility, they are likely to reare up a moſt beautiful Building in way of comfort.

Secondly, Improve the grace of faith in beleiving, and

that is the way to increaſe comfort. 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom though you have not ſeen, yet believing, you rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* Though they did never ſee Chriſt, yet believing in Chriſt, and improving their faith, they had not onely an ordinary meaſure of comfort, but they had more comfort in their hearts then they could utter with their tongue; *They rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* So *Rom.* 15. 13. *The God of peace fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the Holy Ghoſt.* Believing makes you full of joy, and makes you abound in it. The more you are in believing, the more you will be in aſſurance.

Thirdly, Improve the grace of love to Jeſus Chriſt. *Iohn* 14. 23. *If any man love me, my Father ſhall love him, and we will come in unto him, and make our abode with him.* If you improve in your love to Jeſus Chriſt, God the Father and God the Son will make their dwelling in your hearts. Now he muſt needs be a comfortable Chriſtian, that hath ſo good a gueſt as God the Father and Jeſus Chriſt to come in, and make their abode with him. As you know, to your boſome-friend whom you love, and you know loves you, you will communicate all your ſecrets: Thus will God the Father, if he knows you are his boſome-friends, and ſeeth you love him, he will communicate all his comforts to you; you ſhall never want comforts, if you increaſe in love to Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, Improve the grace of godly ſorrow; you will never find ſweeter muſick in comfort, then when you are laid down in tears. As the ſound of Trumpets is never more pleaſant then when they are upon the water; ſo when God ſeeth you flow with the water of repentance and godly ſorrow, then you are likely to hear the moſt melodious harmony in the apprehenſion of Gods love; *Pſal.* 126. *They that ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy.* You ſhall not onely have a dram, but a handful of joy; as Reapers they cut down handfuls of corn at once. And as you know in ſeed, though you ſow but one grain of corn, there may a dozen ears come from that one ſeed: ſo if you ſow but a little godly ſorrow, a grain of godly ſorrow may be a root to a great deal of ſpiritual joy.

Secondly,

Secondly. If you would improve your aſſurance, preſerve a clear conſcience, both towards God and man. *A good conſcience is a continual Feaſt Prov.* 15. 15. Aſſurance, I may ſay of it as the Father ſpeaks of the Holy Ghoſt, and the comforts thereof, The Spirit of God is a very nice thing, every thing will give the comforts of Gods Spirit a check and diſtaſte; now if you harbour ſin upon conſcience, you will never thrive in comfort; every thing will give comfortable motions a check. And as Philoſophers ſay, when the Aire is foggy, it ariſeth from vapours that are exhaled from the earth, which makes the Aire ſo cloudy as it is; So it is filth drawn from our earthly hearts that makes ſuch foggy miſts to ariſe between our comforts and us, and between God and us. You muſt keep conſcience clear, elſe you will never keep heaven clear. Heaven will be clouded, if the heart be filthy. *Iob* 11. 14, 15. *If iniquity be in thy hand, put it far away*; If ſin be upon the conſcience, harbour it not, *for then thou ſhalt lift up thy face before God, thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt, and not fear.* You ſhall not onely not fear, but you ſhall have a degree of aſſurance. You ſhall be ſtedfaſt, if you put ſin far away from you. A ſullied and a polluted conſcience ſhall never be in a Chriſtian ſtrong in aſſurance. You will not grow in aſſurance, if your conſcience harbour guilt.

Res delicata eſt Spiritus Dei.

Thirdly, If you would improve your aſſurance, keep cloſe in communion with God. Nothing that feeds comfort ſo much as a Chriſtians holy walking, *Eſa.* 32. 17. *The work of righteouſneſs ſhall be peace, and the effect thereof quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.* If you walk in works of righteouſneſs, and in a way of keeping cloſe communion with God; this ſhall be peace, and this ſhall be quietneſs, and great aſſurance. Mark how the holy Ghoſt makes a gradation; not onely peace and quietneſs, but aſſurance alſo: you ſhall have the higheſt degree of peace, and the higheſt ſtep of comfort, if you walk diligently in a way of holineſs with your God. And thus much be ſpoken to the firſt ſort of men, thoſe that live in the enjoyment of the aſſurance of their effectual calling.

I have now a word to thoſe men that live in the want of this aſſurance, who haply have in times paſt had ſome glimmering

ring, and ſome dim ſight of comfort, touching their everlaſting eſtate, and yet are now much clouded and eclipſed in their comforts, or have loſt the comforts they once had, what they ſhould do to recover it. And to theſe I ſhall by way of direction ſpeak onely four things.

Firſt, That you would ſet upon ſearching work. Secondly, Upon humbling work. Thirdly, upon praying work. And fourthly, that you would ſet upon meditating work: Theſe four helpes will through Gods bleſſing be very conducible to reſtore your wonted comforts to you.

Firſt, My counſel ſhall be to you, that you would ſet upon ſearching and examining works. When you have loſt any thing, the firſt thing you do is to look after it, where you have loſt it, that you may finde it again. If you have loſt this precious Jewel of aſſurance, be thus wiſe for your ſelves; O ſet upon ſeeking and ſearching work. The Scripture gives you this hint, *Gal. 6. 4. Let every man ſearch his own work, and then he ſhall have rejoycing in himſelf.* This is the way to bring in ſpiritual joy and ſpirituall comfort, to be often dealing with your own hearts. *David* when he lay under ſome foul diſtemper, marke how he deals with his own ſoul: *Why art thou troubled, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* he puts his heart upon the trial. And here in your ſearching work, I would commend five things to your examination.

Firſt, Search how you got your aſſurance.

Secondly, Search how you ground your aſſurance.

Thirdly, Search how you manage your aſſurance.

Fourthly, Search what ſhould provoke God to take away your aſſurance.

Fifthly and laſtly, Search what you would give to God, ſo you might regain your former and wonted aſſurance. Put theſe queſtions to your hearts; As

Firſt, Put upon the ſearch, how you got your aſſurance. It may be it was ſuch an aſſurance as you have had ever ſince you were born, from your mothers womb; that you got without care, and without pain; and if ſo, this is preſumption, not aſſurance: and if you have loſt this, it is well. It is better to be in a ſtate of diſcouragement, then in a ſtate of preſumption.

Secondly,

Secondly, Examine how you grounded your aſſurance. It may be you bottomed it upon ſelf, not upon Chriſt. It may be, you bottomed it upon the fantaſtical deluſions of your own hearts, and not upon the grounded evidence of Gods Word; if ſo, that your aſſurance have had an ill bottom, it is no wonder if God turn it upſide down. If it be not rightly grounded, it will never long be continued. Examine therefore upon what grounds you have bottomed your aſſurance, and if you finde the foundation of your comfort to be ill laid, you muſt pluck up all again.

Thirdly, Search how you manage your aſſurance. It may be you manage your aſſurance with pride, not humility: it may be with unwatchfulneſs, and careleſneſs of ſpirit, and did not take notice of thoſe temptations and ſuggeſtions that might empair your comforts; and if ſo, it is no wonder if the devil ſows tares among your wheat; it is no wonder if the devil have ſtolne away your comforts, if you have laid down your watch.

Fourthly, Examine what ſpecial cauſe there was in your hearts, that might provoke God to cloud you in your comforts, and to take away your aſſurance from you. And here that you might a little be directed in this ſearch, you may reduce the cauſe of your eclipſe, and of the removal of your aſſurance, unto this twofold head. Either it hath been the commiſſion of ſome great tranſgreſſion, or elſe the omiſſion of ſome weighty duty, that may provoke God to darken your comforts; As

Firſt, the commiſſion of ſome great tranſgreſſion. Great ſins they lay a foundation for great diſcomforts in tender conſciences. Great ſins they lay the conſcience waſte; to make it that was as a well-trimmed and impaled garden, to be as a ruinous wilder neſs. Great relapſes they bring ordinarily dark eclipſes upon the ſoul. And here that I might put you on this ſearch, I would adviſe you to ſearch what particular ſin it was, & how you might know the tranſgreſſion that might provoke God to take away your comforts from you. As,

Firſt, if ſo be God did take away your comforts immediately after the committing of any groſs ſin, then you may be ſure that ſin was the occaſion. Or,

Secondly,

Secondly, If the commission of one sin do bring upon you more then an ordinary measure of hardness of heart, then you may be sure that was the sin. Or,

Thirdly, If any sin makes you remisse in spiritual duties, that was the sin provoked God to take away your comforts from you. And by such a search as this, you might finde out, and give a shrewd guess at the particular provocation.

And here the particular transgressions I would have you search about, they are ordinarily these four, that ingage God to take away comforts from a people. As

First, the sin of supercilliousness, and uncompassionateness of spirit towards doubting Christians. If a soul carries a proud and supercilious eye over poor Christians, & carries no compassion towards doubting souls; God for that sin of wanting bowels of compassion, may bring him to the same estate which he could not compassionate in other men.

Secondly, the sin of grieving the Spirit; if you grieve Gods Spirit, God will grieve yours, *Esa.* 63. 10. Or,

Thirdly, The sin of spiritual pride; ordinarily this may be the sin. Or,

Fourthly, the sin of worldly-mindedness, or eager pursuite after the things of the world. As digging in the earth doth endanger a man to be stifled with damps; so digging and poring in the world brings but a damp upon a Christians comforts, and many times stifles their assurance. As the Sun is eclipsed by the interposition of the Moon between it and our sight; so if the world once get between the Sun of righteousness and you, it will eclipse the Sun that you shall not see the glory of Jesus Christ, and shal not perceive nor gain that interest in Jesus Christ you had in former time.

Secondly, Another cause you are to search; If it be not the commission of some great transgression, yet it may be the omission of necessary and weighty duty, and the Lord may bring you upon the stage of discomfort for omission as well as commission. If a man do let but a wound go undressed, he may as well die, as if you knock him with a Beetle upon the head: Beloved, if you let your wounds be undressed, and let your discomforts be unlooked after, and let all run at sixes

and

and ſevens; if you interrupt your duties, it is juſt with God to interrupt you in your comforts. If you keep not your watch, 'tis no wonder if you are ſurprized. There are many Chriſtians that grow careleſs in keeping communion with God, that love ſeldome reading, and ſeldome praying, and ſeldome examining their own hearts; (alas) men caſting away their duties, it makes God in judgment make ſtoppage in a way of comfort.

Fifthly, In your ſearching work examine your ſelves what you would do in caſe God ſhould reſtore to you your former evidences; could you bring your hearts to this temper, that you would think no pains too much to take, no coſt too much to give, nothing ſhould be irkſome to you that God would have you perform, in caſe he would give you your wonted comforts? If you find this temper of ſpirit in you, this is a very ready way to bring on your comforts, and reſtore the joyes of your ſalvation to you.

Secondly, Set upon humbling work: the onely way to gain what you have loſt, is to mourn over your loſſes. *Ier.* 31. 18, 19, 20. See how *Ephraim* comes to have his comforts reſtored, when he wept over his own diſcomforts: *I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelf*, ſaith God; and I ſaid, *Is Ephraim my dear ſonne? I ſaw him ſmiting upon his thigh*, humbling his ſoul for his ſins; *and ſince I ſaw him, I do earneſtly remember him, and I will ſhew mercy to him.* Here you ſee lamenting *Ephraim*; God in the very time of his bemoaning himſelf, reſtored his comforts to him: we hear many lament for their outward loſſes, but who laments for the loſs of inward comforts? And *David* after he had loſt his comforts by that great ſin of adultery, makes ſeven penitential Pſalms, Pſalms of lamentation or repentance; and he calls one of them, *A Pſalm to call to remembrance.* And as an Author well notes, when *David* came to renew his comforts, he makes a Pſalm to call to remembrance thoſe ſins that might provoke God to take away his comforts from him: So beloved, let it be your work to make ſuch Pſalms in your Cloſets, and make it your practice to call to remembrance thoſe evils that provoke God to eclipſe your comforts to you, and let that humble you. If you cannot

find out the Particular sin, labour to humble your selves for every sin, and then to be sure you cannot miss that.

Thirdly, Would you restore your wonted comforts? then set upon praying work. This course you find *David* took; *Psalm* 51. 8. *Make me, O Lord, to hear the voice of joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken might rejoyce. Create in me a new heart, and establish me with thy free Spirit*, verse 12. Here you read of *Davids* praying work, how he poured forth his soul in prayer, that God would restore to him the joyes of his salvation. And here in your praying work I would onely cast in three directions.

First, pray for a distinct sight of those evils that provoked God to take your comforts from you.

Secondly, After you have got a sight, bend the strength of your prayers most against those evils that did so provoke God to cloud your comforts. Pray against them, as against the deadliest enemy you have in the world.

Thirdly, Pray for attaining those graces that may be inlets to spiritual comfort, as the graces before named: the grace of godly sorrow, the grace of humiliation, the grace of faith, and of love to Jesus Christ. Thus if you set upon searching, upon humbling, and upon praying work; you are in a likely way to have your comforts restored.

Fourthly, Set upon the work of Meditation; and in this work, I shall commend four meditations you are to tak into your thoughts, which may be very helpeful and useful to you in restoring your comforts. As,

First, Let your meditations run upon this, that sometimes you are not so competent Judges of your own spiritual estate as others may be; As,

First, In a time of desertion, when God hath left you and frowns upon you.

Secondly, In times of temptation, when the Devils temptations are violent against you.

Thirdly, In times of relapse, when you are fallen into some great sin; at this time you are not so competent Judges of your own estate, but standers-by may see more of your own good, and your own sincerity then your selves may do; as the

the Proverb is, Many times Lookers on ſee more then he that playes the game; it is true in this. A Looker on may ſee ſincerity ſparkle in thy practice, and thy graces ſhine in thy converſation, when thou canſt not do it thy ſelf. A child when it blubbers and cryes, can ſee nothing of his book: So when Chriſtians are ſad, and ſullen, and lumpiſh, they can hardly read any thing of their evidence. Mr. *Throgmorton* got his aſſurance this way, by the Teſtimony of a company of godly Miniſters that they could lay their ſouls in his ſouls ſtead. Let this therefore run in your Meditations, that many times ſtanders by and Chriſtians that behold your walkings, and ſee your Actions, they may ſee more ground of comfort in you then your ſelves can do.

Secondly, Meditate and think upon the comforts God gave you in wonted time, and call them to mind. Do as *David* did, *Pſal. 77. I called to mind the daies of old, and the years of many generations.* Call to mind ancient daies, did not God ſhew thee his face? did not God bear thee in the palms of his hands? did not God give thee many a ſmile of his countenance, and many a pledge of his love, even by affliction it ſelf? did not God ſet many a ſeal upon thy heart, that thy comforts were true, thy evidence clear, and thy ends ſincere towards God? Beloved, call to mind the former frame of thy ſpirit, how thou waſt in wonted times, and this Meditation being backed by Gods Spirit, may be a great means to reſtore thy comforts to thee; paſt goodneſs ſhould be preſent encouragement.

Thirdly, Meditate what way it was that you got your former comforts and aſſurance; and the ſame way God will ſanctifie to reſtore you to your comforts again. What Phyſicians ſay of the body, We are nouriſhed of thoſe things of which we are begotten and generated; So I ſay of comforts: The very ſame thing that begot comforts, the ſame will reſtore your comforts again. Now think upon this in your practice, and conſider, What way did I gain my comforts in years paſt? did I gain my comforts by godly ſorrow, and by lamenting after God, and by mourning over thoſe abominable failings in my practice? now take the ſame courſe to reſtore thy

Ex quo gignimur eodem nutrimur.

thy evidences. Goe and mourn in thy cloſet over thy uneven walking before God. Goe lament for thy ſins, mourn after thy Father, and tell him thou art grieved at the heart that he is ſo great a ſtranger to thy ſoul. Didſt thou gain thy aſſurance in dayes paſt by humbling thy ſoul often before God? Set upon humbling work again. Didſt thou gain thy comforts in daies paſt by walking cloſely with thy God? Amend thy paths, and direct thy waies unto thy Maker for daies to come; there is the very ſame way to reſtore your comforts, that was at firſt to gain your comforts.

Fourthly, Let your Meditations work upon thoſe comforting Promiſes in the Goſpel, that hold forth moſt comfort to a dejected ſoul. And truly I am perſwaded, Chriſtians Meditations running more upon their own failings, and their own jealouſies, and upon their own miſtakes, then upon Goſpel-promiſes, hath been the great occaſion they have layn ſo long under a ſpirit of bondage, and under a dark eclipſe in the want of the comforts of Gods Spirit. Therefore now let your Meditations work upon thoſe Promiſes that hold forth moſt comfort to a dejected and deſerted ſoule. And here I ſhall name five or ſix moſt comfortable Promiſes in the Word; As *Iſa.* 57.15. *The Lord that dwels in the high and holy places, he doth revive the ſpirit of the humble, and of the contrite one.* So *Iſa.* 66. 2. *The Lord dwels in the heavens, and yet with him alſo that is of an humble and contrite ſpirit, that trembles at his Word*; with him will God dwell. So *Pſal.* 34. 18. *The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart, even them that are contrite in ſpirit.* So *Luke* 4. 11. Jeſus Chriſt was *anointed*, that is, appointed by God the Father, *to preach the Goſpel to the poor, to bind up the broken in heart, and to comfort them that mourn.* So *Iſa.* 66. 10. *The Lord will reſtore comfort to thee and to thy Mourners.* And *Heb.* 12. 12. *The Lord will ſtrengthen the weak and feeble knees.* And with that remarkable and moſt glorious Goſpel-promiſe I ſhall end, *Iſa.* 35. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.* This ſaith God to weake Chriſtians, whoſe legs can hardly carry their bodies, and their hands hardly reach to their mouths. Say unto the weak Chriſtian in grace, comfort, and confirm and ſtrengthen them: *And ſay unto*

unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be ſtrong; poor fearful doubting ſouls, that fear every temptation, and fear every corruption, and fear they ſhal loſe the recompence of their reward: Say unto that fearful heart, Be ſtrong and fear not. *For your God will come with vengeance, even God will come with recompence and ſave you. And then the eyes of the blind ſhall be open, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped*; it is not meant of the bodily eye, but thoſe that were blind, and could not ſee the myſteries of Chriſt, and could not read their own comforts, then their eyes ſhall be open. And the deaf that, as *Iſaiah* ſaith, refuſed to be comforted, that would not hearken to comfort, but would ſtop their ears againſt all comfortable doctrines, and onely give way to ſorrow, their ears ſhall be unſtopped. *And the lame men ſhall leap like a Hart*; the poor halting Chriſtian that halts in his comforts, that is now believing, anon ſtaggering; now rejoycing, anon deſpairing; the poor lame man ſhall leap like a Hart. *And the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing*: the poor man that could not ſpeak one word of his own graces, and of his own comforts, and touching his own evidence, *The toung of the dumb ſhall ſing*. O Beloved, here is your work, in caſe you would be Chriſtians to reſtore your comforts again, ſet upon the work of Meditation; to think upon theſe precious Promiſes of the Goſpel, that hold forth moſt comfort to a drooping and dejected ſinner.

SERMON

Sermon XII.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.

THE Doctrine I am yet upon is this, *That Christians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this sure to their souls, that they are effectually called by Jesus Christ to grace and glory.* In the prosecution of which I have gone over many particulars.

There remains now onely one Use more to dispatch about this subject, and then I pass to the third point drawn from these words. And the Use shall be of consolation; from all that hath been said touching the assurance of our effectual calling; I shall onely direct my discourse to lay down six or seven Consolatory Conclusions to those Christians who are effectually called, yet haply have not a sensible assurance of their own calling.

First, take this for a truth, that Assurance is necessary, not for the being, but for the wel-being of a Christian. It is not necessary to his estate, but to his comfort. It is not necessary as food is to the life, but onely as Physick is to the body. A man cannot live without food; a man may live without Physick. Assurance is but as a comfortable cordial to the soul; Grace is as food to keep the soul alive, though you do want assurance, this Cordial to bear you up.

Secondly, that many of Gods dear children, they may lie a very long time in the want of this assurance touching their effectual calling. *Psal.* 88. It is said of *Heman*, 14, 15, 16. verses

ſies. *Lord why haſt thou caſt off my ſoul? and why haſt thou hid thy face from me!* Mark his complaint: *I am ready to die.* And was this onely a fit of deſertion, or was it a continued act? yes; Verſ. 16. *From my youth up I ſuffer thy terrours, I am diſtracted, and thy fierce wrath goes over me. Heman* lay under the ſtate of deſertion from his childhood; for here he tels you his eſtate, that he was not troubled for a day, or two, or three, and then his troubles were over; but from his youth up he lay under this perplexity, that he thought God had caſt off his ſoul, and the terrours of God lay upon him: And yet this man none queſtions his goodneſs. For he was the man, as *Ainſworth* thinks, that made this Pſalm; and ſure God would never honour a wicked man to be a Pen-man of the Scripture. The Pſalm is called a golden Pſalm; and it is ſo called, becauſe hereby he would teach afflicted conſciences, that they may from their youth up lie under great horſour, and lie under ſad ſuſpence concerning their everlaſting eſtate, and yet they may have grace at the root for all this. And *Heman* doth not onely expreſs, as if he had an ordinary trouble of mind; but he expreſſeth it, that he lay under an extraordinary weight of Gods wrath, Ver. 7. *Thou haſt laid me in the loweſt pit of darkneſs, and in the deep, and thy wrath it lies heavy upon me.* He did even lie and ſink in his own thoughts under the ſenſe of Gods wrath upon him. This therefore is another comfortable concluſion, That godly men may not onely by fits and ſtarts, but for a long time, for many years together lie under a ſtate of ſpiritual deſertion. For ſome men think of *Heman*, that he was above threeſcore years of age when he wrote this Pſalm; yet from his youth up till that age, he lay under this horror and perplexity.

Thirdly, That many of Gods dear children may be ſo long plunged under deſertion, and under the want of aſſurance, that they may refuſe and withſtand comfort, when God offers it to them in the Goſpel, and yet may have grace ſtill. As a man in a feaver, or diſtracted by ſome violent diſeaſe, though you bring him a Cordial that may abate his diſeaſe, the man in a fit will throw the glaſs againſt the wall, though it be the only meanes of his remedy. It is ſo with godly men;

many

many times they are ſo accuſtomed to ſadneſs in the want of aſſurance, that they may refuſe comforts when God offers them. *Pſal.* 77. 2. It is the ſpeech of *Aſaph, my ſoul refuſeth to be comforted*; a ſtrange ſpeech: Though he was offered comfort, yet his ſoul refuſed it. Here then, Beloved, this may be a very great prop to thee, that thou mayeſt ſo long be accuſtomed to a courſe of doubting, that thou mayeſt refuſe comfort when God tenders it, and yet be a gracious heart ſtill.

Fourthly, and this is more comfortable yet, That rather then God will let his people live and dye without aſſurance, he will work aſſurance in you by a miracle, or by ſome unuſuall or extraordinary way. A famous inſtance you have for this, of a Gentlewoman that once lived in this City, (its Mr. *Bolton* that relates the ſtory) one Miſtris *Honywood*, who was a famous profeſſor of Religion, and a woman that for many years was much troubled in mind for the want of her aſſurance. At length there came a Miniſter to her, who endeavoured to ſettle her hopes and comforts in Jeſus Chriſt; and he urging promiſes to her, ſhe took it with a kind of indignation and anger, that he ſhould offer to preſent any promiſe to her, to whom ſhe thought it did not belong; and having a Venice-glaſs in her hand, ſhe holds up the glaſs, and ſaid, Speak no more to me of ſalvation, for I ſhall as ſurely be damned as this poor Venice-glaſs ſhall be broken againſt the wall, throwing it with all her force to break it. But it pleaſed God by a miraculous providence to preſerve the glaſs whole. The Miniſter ſeeing this, took up the glaſs, and ſaid, Behold, God muſt by a miracle work faith in you, before you will believe; And from that day, the ſtory ſaith, ſhe was a woman very ſtrong in the aſſurance of Gods love. Here you ſee how God did indulge the infirmity of his poor ſervant; Rather then thou ſhalt live and die without aſſurance, God will bring it about even by a Miracle; this woman, it may be, had died unaſſured, if God had not confirmed her by ſome unuſual way. I have read likewiſe in the Book of Martyrs, of Mr. *Glover*, that all the while he was in priſon, he was under a ſtate of deſertion, and very much clouded in his comforts, and could not have any apprehenſion of Gods love to his ſoul. Yet when he

he came into *Smithfield*, and ſaw the ſtake, and the fire in which he was to be burnt, he cryed out, I have found him, I have found him, and profeſt of himſelf, he was as full of joy as his heart could hold. The Lord made the very ſight of the ſtake to be an inlet to preſent joy. One would have thought that the ſight of the ſtake ſhould have daunted him; whereas he then grew moſt confident.

Fifthly, That though grace in thy heart be unchangeable, yet the ſenſe and feeling of thy own graces is ſubject to great variation and change. Grace in it ſelf is unchangeable. All the Devils in hell cannot pluck the meaneſt believer out of Chriſts hand. *Thoſe whom thou haſt given me, I will keep*, ſaith Chriſt, *and none ſhall take them from me. The foundation of God ſtands ſure*; though thy knowledge that thou buildeſt upon that foundation may not be ſure to thee. *The Lord knows who are his*, though thou mayſt not. Grace it ſelf is not changeable, though thy feeling of grace is ſubject to many alterations and changes. Though grace it ſelf be an unſhaken foundation, yet our feeling of grace is not ſo. In our feeling of grace, we are like the air, ſometimes clear, ſometimes cloudy; we are like the Sea, ſometimes ebbing, ſometimes flowing; ebbing in your comforts, as well as flowing in your graces. Believers in their feeling of grace, are like the trees of the field, ſometimes flouriſhing, green and growing; another time at the fall of the leaf, like a withered ſtump. So are Chriſtians touching their own feeling; their apprehenſion of their graces is ſubject to much change, though their graces be not ſo.

Sixthly, That the want of Aſſurance is not ſimply prejudicial to the ſalvation of a Chriſtian, though it be prejudicial to the conſolation of a Chriſtian. It is no way prejudicial to your ſalvation, but you may be ſaved, though you are not aſſured. For firſt, this want of aſſurance is no prejudice to your free acceſs to the Throne of grace: you may come freely to preſent your requeſts to God, though you are not aſſured of acceptance. As it is the ſaying of an Author: Though God ſhews thee not his face, yet he may lend thee his ear, when thou comeſt to him in prayer; God lends ma-

ny a Christian an ear in prayer, though they see not his face, nor the glimpse of his favour. Secondly, thy want of Assurance shall not hinder thy success in prayer, but thou maist go away with an ample return, though thou dost not go away with fulness of comfort. *Benjamin* when he was with *Ioseph* in Egypt, he had a token of love from *Ioseph*, a golden Cup in his sack, though he knew it not. This is a lively Embleme of the carriage of our *Ioseph*, Jesus Christ, to his young *Benjamins*, who may put a love-token in your hearts, and may give you a golden cup, and give you grace, and you not know that grace is there. And lastly, it doth not hinder your reconciliation, but you may be at peace with God, though you know not that the agreement is made up; there may be real friendship between God and a Believer, though there may be some seeming enmity. *Thou holdest me for thine enemy*, saith *Iob*; yet God did not, though he thought so. *Zion* said, *the Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me*, Isa. 49. 14. But God hath not done so, for he tels them a little before, almost in one breath, *Though a Mother may forget her sucking childe, yet will I not forget you*: So that there may be some seeming jars when there is no enmity at all between God and you.

Seventhly, That Christians, who have attained the strongest and highest degree of faith, have yet had many defects and doubtings mingled with their faith. *Lord I believe*, Mark 9. *Yet help my unbelief*; yet that man attained to a high pitch of faith, 1 *Thes.* 3. 10. *Night and day we pray exceedingly for you, that we may see your face, and perfect that which is wanting in your faith.* Now you must not take these *Thessalonians*, as if they were new Converts, or a people weak in the faith; but herein lies the Emphasis, that though these *Thessalonians* were the most eminent Christians of all the world, yet they had a great defect in their faith. Therefore compare this with 1 *Thes.* 1. 7, 8. *You were examples to all that believe in* Macedonia, *and* Achaia; *for from you sounded out the word of the Lord not onely in* Macedonia *and* Achaia, *but also in every place your faith to* Godward *is spread abroad.* The people in every place spake of the great measure of faith that was in the godly people of this Church, and yet though their faith was so eminent,

and

and they Christians so eminent as they were, yet they had some defects, and they had somewhat lacking in their faith for all this. See also *Psal.* 55. 5. and *Psal.* 77. So that here is very great comfort for Believers, that the strongest Christians in the Faith have had great defects that have attended their graces.

Thus having finished these seven comfortable Conclusions, because I would have no deluded sinner nuzzled up in presumptuous perswasions of his own blessedness, when he is a cursed man, and designed for hell; I have two or three sad conclusions to lay down, for all you that harbour groundless and presumptuous perswasions of your effectuall calling, when you are not: As,

First, You that nourish presumptuous perswasions of your effectual calling, when you are not, take this conclusion to dread your hearts, That it is likely you shall never be effectually called by Jesus Christ. There is no man so unlikely to be truly called by Christ, as that man that thinks he is called when he is not, *Matth. 9. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* Righteous men, *i. e.* that thought they were righteous, and in their own eye thought they had grace, and were as good as the best, *I came not*, saith Christ, *to call them, but sinners, i. e.* sinners that see their sin, and see their need of a Saviour, and are sensible of their lost and undone condition without Christ, Christ came to save them, and to call them to repentance: Of all men in the world, you are most unlikely to be called that nourish ungrounded perswasions of your effectual calling.

Secondly, whilst you live in this world, you are meere strangers to that inward and spiritual joy which every true Believer feels and findeth by Jesus Christ. You *do not intermeddle with those inward solaces, and sweet enjoyments of heart*, which every sincere Believer hath in Jesus Christ. A man that hath assurance upon good ground, he is so filled with joy, that it will bear him up against all the sufferings and sorrows he may meet with here in the world. He that hath assurance, no suffering can daunt him. As *Adolphus Clarebachius*, when he was burning at the stake, he was so filled with the assurance of

Gods love, that he ſaith of himſelf, I think in my heart, there is not a merrier heart in the world then mine is. And ſo another Martyr burning at the ſtake ſaith, I taſte as much ſweetneſs, and find as much eaſe now I am in the flames, as if I lay upon a bed of Roſes. The fulneſs of his joy in the aſſurance of Gods love, made him willingly undergoe any torment. Mr. *Sanders* was in priſon till he was in priſon; *Bainam* ſaid when he was in the fire, I feel no more then if I were in a bed of down. Whereas, thou that harboureſt falſe perſwaſions, thy hopes will ſhrink when thou comeſt to ſuffer, like cloth not well woven, on a rainy day; thy deluſions will never bear up thy ſpirit to ſo high a pitch as theſe are, This is thy miſery, thou wilt never have that ſweet peace and rejoycing in thy heart Believers have, who are aſſured upon Scripture grounds.

Thirdly, take this for thy dread, that thou wilt be thrown into hell before thou art aware. It is the ſpeech of Mr. *Bolton*; That man that takes up a falſe perſwaſion of his effectual calling, when he is not, he is like unto a man that is in a pleaſant dream, who dreames he is a King, and hath a kingdome, and hath Treaſures full of Silver and gold; yet when he awakes, behold the man hath nothing. He compares him likewiſe to a man that is aſleep upon the Maſt of a Ship: he is in a golden dream, and dreams of Kingdoms, and of thouſands which he hath, and haply in a moment the wind ariſeth, the ſhip is toſſed upon the waves, and the man is tumbled into the Ocean and drowned. It is ſo with many men, who nouriſh golden dreams and hopes that heaven is theirs, and Chriſt theirs; when as (alas) they are tumbled and thrown into hell, before they are aware. And this ſhould be a dreadful meditation to thy heart, that harboureſt preſumptuous perſwaſions of thy effectual calling when thou art not.

Thus I have done in eleven Sermons with this Doctrine touching effectual calling. I paſs now to the third and laſt point drawn from theſe words: and that is,

That Chriſtians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſouls, that they are eternally elected by God to life and ſalvation. Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure.

There

There are many profitable points to be handled in the diſpatch of this Doctrine, I ſhall onely in this remnant of time proſecute a few. And firſt I ſhall ſhew you what election is:

Secondly, whether a man may be ſure of his own election, ſeeing election is an act from eternity. How can a man be ſure of that which was done in Gods councel before we had a being? Thirdly, by what diſcoveries may a man infallibly judge that he is elected.

In the diſcuſſion of this Doctrine, I begin with the firſt, What election is?

Which that you may know, I ſhall lay down this brief deſcription of it.

Election is an eternal decree or purpoſe of God, whereby he hath freely choſen out of the maſs of mankind, a ſmall company of men and women that ſhall come to everlaſting life and ſalvation by Ieſus Chriſt: This is election.

And here in this deſcription there are theſe things to be taken notice of. Firſt, I call it an *eternal purpoſe*; becauſe, though a man be not juſtified from eternity, yet he is elected from eternity. God from eternity had a purpoſe that man ſhould be juſtified, and ſhould be called, and ſhould be ſaved. Election is from eternity, though vocation, juſtification, and glorification be not ſo. Hence you read in Scripture, when it ſpeaks of Election, *Eph.* 1. 4. *He hath elected us in Chriſt, before the foundation of the world.* But it is never ſaid ſo of Juſtification. God had a purpoſe to make us happy, and a purpoſe to call us in time, and a purpoſe to juſtifie us from eternity, though the acting of this purpoſe is in due time fulfilled. Secondly, I call it *a purpoſe where by he could freely chuſe.* And this I doe in oppoſition to that Papiſtical Tenet, that God doth predeſtinate or elect men to ſalvation upon the foreſight of good works. A moſt abominable opinion, and takes off the freeneſs of this act of Gods election, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Not according to our works, but according to his own purpoſe and grace*: ſo I ſay thirdly, *Whereby God doth freely chuſe out of the maſs of mankind a few to obtain life and ſalvation.* In oppoſition to thoſe that hold for univerſal redemption, and univerſal Grace; As *Origen*, and from him many more have been tainted with this error,

error, to hold Election universal. And ſo many of the Papiſts: Now the Scripture tells us, that *many are called, but few are choſen.* Election ſignifies a choice; now a choice, the very word imports a rejecting of ſome, and a culling out of others. The word Election imports, that all ſhall not be ſaved. *Origen* held this, that all men ſhould be ſaved; that Election ſhall extend to every man; yea, the very Devils at the day of judgment ſhall be ſaved; which is an opinion among Chriſtians not to be named: for Election belongs but to a few. Fourthly, I ſay, that tis to bring them to eternal life, and ſalvation; therefore called ordination to eternal life *Act.* 13. 48.

Queſt. 2. Secondly, Whether may a Chriſtian in this life be aſſured of his eternal Election, foraſmuch as Election was done in the decree of God, before ever he had a being, or the world was? Therefore ſeeing we are not privy to Gods decree and councel, how can it be ſaid, that we may know and be aſſured of our Eternal Election? Indeed the *Papiſts* they beat down this Doctrine. And hence it is that in the Councel of *Trent* there was this Canon made, that if any man ſhould ſay he was bound to believe that he was of the number of them that God hath predeſtinated, or elected to life, let him be an accurſed man. They did endeavour to beat down aſſurance, and held, that all that a man could have muſt be onely a conjectural aſſurance, or ſome kinde of hopes of ſalvation, and no other. Now that you might not erre in this point, ſee what the Scripture ſpeaks in this caſe. That though Election be an act of God from eternity, yet a believer may firmly and fully know his own election: And this I ſhall make good by ſeveral places of Scripture. Read *Luke* 10. 20. *Rejoyce not*, ſaith Chriſt to his diſciples, *that you have have power to caſt out Divels, that they are ſubject to you, but rather reioyce in this, that your names are written in the book of life.* That is, rejoyce not that you can work miracles; that wicked men can doe that are not elected: but rather rejoyce that your names are written in the book of life; that is, that in Gods decree you are elected to ſalvation. Now, how could they rejoyce, unleſſe they knew this? So, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 4. *Knowing brethren, beloved,*

your

your election of God. The Apoſtle takes it for granted, that believers did know they were elected. So *Epheſ.* 1.3,4,5. *The Lord hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt, according as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world was, having predeſtinated us to the adoption of children by Ieſus Chriſt.* Many more Scriptures I might urge, but in the mouth of two or three witneſſes it is enough to confirme every truth.

But now, though the Scripture be thus clear, yet there are ſome objections that ſeemingly oppoſe this truth, which I muſt ſatisfie. The *Papiſts*, as far as I have read in their writings, I finde five objections they draw from Scripture againſt this truth, that a man may be aſſured of his Election: for, ſay they, it was an act of Gods, done before we had a being, and how can we be aſſured of that? I will therefore, Beloved, firſt produce thoſe Scriptures that they pretend will overthrow this point, and then take off what ſeemes to make againſt it. The firſt Text they urge, is 1 *Pet.* 1.17. *Paſſe the time of your ſojourning here in fear.* This Scripture (ſay they) bids us paſſe our time in fear; and if ſo, then we cannot be aſſured of our Election, but we muſt fear all the dayes of our life, whether we are elected or no.

To this I ſhall anſwer briefly. You muſt know the fear that the holy Ghoſt here preſſeth, that men ſhould paſſe their time in fear, is not meant of a fear about our election, but it is meant of a feare of ſin; that we muſt not ſinne againſt God, but fear God, and fear to provoke God by our ſinne. And if you ask how this appeares, I make it appear plainly, thus; for verſ. 18. it is ſaid, *Knowing, beloved, that you are not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, but with the precious blood of Chriſt, &c.* Now this verſe proves clearly, that they knew they were redeemed by Chriſts blood, and ſo by conſequence knew their Election. Therefore the Apoſtle did not preſs a fear, to beat down the knowledge of their election; but *paſs your time in fear, i.e.* fear to offend God, and fear to ſin againſt him.

Another objection they urge is this: The Scripture, ſay they, doth often commend feare to us; and ſurely fear and aſſu-

rance

rance cannot ſtand together. *Prov.* 28. 14. *Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwaies.* Now if a man muſt alwaies fear, then the moſt a man can have is hope; and ſo hang between hope and fear all our daies. To which I anſwer.

That the fearing alwaies which *Solomon* annexed bleſſednes unto, is not meant of the fear about a mans election, but onely a fear to ſin againſt God. And if you aſk me how that appears, read the whole verſe, *Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwayes, but he that hardens his heart ſhall run into miſchief.* Now mark, by the Antitheſis it is apparent that fear there, is not a fear of our everlaſting eſtate, but onely a fear in oppoſition to hardneſs of heart in wicked men, that go on in a courſe of ſinne.

Another place they urge, is 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. *Wherefore let him that thinks he ſtands take heed leſt he fall.* Now ſay they, the Scripture tells us, that every man though never ſo firm, as he thinks, about his election; yet he muſt take heed, he may fall from grace, and be damned for all this. Now by way of anſwer to this, I would lay down two things.

Firſt, The Apoſtle doth not ſpeak of men that have a grounded aſſurance of their election; but to men that lie in carnal ſecurity, and have deluded perſwaſions of their good eſtate; and this appears by the Text, for he ſaith, *let him that thinks he ſtands.* He doth not ſay, *let him that ſtands*; for he cannot fall, but *he that thinks he ſtands.* Thoſe men that nouriſh preſumptuous and ungrounded perſwaſions, that they are in a good eſtate, and in a happy condition, let them take heed leſt they fall.

Secondly, the falling here is not meant a falling away from grace, or a falling away finally after election, for that is impoſſible; but it is onely meant of a falling into ſin: and ſo the meaning is this, *Let him that thinks he ſtands, i. e.* that thinks he is ſtrong in grace, and ſtands upon his own legs, let that man take heed leſt he fall into ſinne. Now a man may take heed of falling into ſinne, yet no way queſtion his aſſurance. And if you aſk how I make it appear that thisis the intendment and ſcope of the place; I anſwer, by the Context. Read the foregoing verſe, *Let us not tempt Chriſt, as they*

tempted

tempted him; let us not murmur, as some of them murmured, for these things hapned to them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition. Therefore let him that thinketh he stands, take heed lest he fall. As much as if he should say, you have here seen some men fall into sin, you have heard some men murmur, some men tempt Christ; this should make you afraid, lest you fall into sin, and suffer the punishment they did. But what is this to the denying of assurance, that men cannot be assured of their Election?

Another place they urge also, is *Phil.* 2. 12. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* Now say they, if a man must work out, and carry on the business of his salvation with fear and trembling, then surely a man can never be assured in this life of his election. To which I answer.

That fear and trembling there spoken of, is not a fear and trembling in opposition to the assurance of our election; but in opposition to that carnal security, and sinful dependence upon our own strength: This is apparent in the next words, *For it is God that worketh in you the will and the deed*; And therefore, because you have no strength of your own, and no power of your own to do any thing, therefore fear and tremble in that regard.

Secondly, fear and trembling may very well be consistent with this grace of assurance; for we read, *Psal.* 2. 11. *Rejoyce in the Lord with trembling.* You may fear and yet rejoyce also. So *Psal.* 5. 7. *As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercies, and in thy fear I will worship towards thine holy Temple.* Here is fear, and confidence in the mercies of God joyned together; to shew, that fear and assurance may very well be consistent each with other. But then they object, how can this be? for *Iohn* saith, *perfect love casteth out fear.* I answer, that though *Iohn* saith, *perfect love casteth out fear*: yet *Iohn* doth not say, that imperfect love casteth out fear. Now in this life our love is imperfect, and therefore mixt with fear; but in Heaven our love is perfect, and so casts out all fear. So that still this makes nothing against us, but that a man may have a grounded assurance of his eternal Election.

Another place they object, is *Rom.* 11. 20. *Be not high minded,*

but fear. To this I answer: These words are not spoken of fearing our Election, that we should fear whether we are elected or no: but serves to beat down any opinion of our own righteousnes, as if we were therefore accepted of God; and to keep us from insulting over the rejected Jewes; now that we are taken in, in their room.

One Scripture more (which indeed is the main Pillar they rest upon) is, *Rom.* 11.34. *Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his Counsellour?* Here say the *Papists*, the Scripture challengeth any man in the world to come forth, and say that he knows Gods mind; by Gods mind is meant Gods decree. And here *Paul* challengeth all, that no man knows the decree of God from eternity. Therefore, if no man knowes the minde of God, then certainly none know their Election, for that is Gods minde, and Gods decree: this they hold an undeniable Argument.

And here to satisfie you in this Scripture, I shall lay down three things.

First, When it is said, *No man knows the mind of God; nor no man is his Counsellour*: this doth hold true, that no man knows the minde or decree of the Lord touching other mens Election. The Apostle doth not speak this, as if no man knew Gods minde about his own, but about other mens Election, who are elected, and who are not; for that is the scope of the place. The *Gentiles*, they thought all the *Iews* were damned men; and they censured and vaunted over them. Now, saith *Paul*, None knows Gods minde concerning others, whether they shall be saved or damned, while they are in this world.

Secondly, no man knows the mind of the Lord in this sense, that is, so as to give a reason of Gods decree, why God did decree this, and decree that; why God did chuse *Peter*, and not elect *Iudas*; no man knows the reason of Gods decree, and of his wayes.

Thirdly, No man knows the mind of the Lord, that is, no man knows Gods decree, looking upon it alone; but by bringing down Gods secret will to his revealed will, and so we may know his decree. I may make use of that place, *Rom.* 10. 8. *Let no man say, I will ascend up to heaven to fetch Christ thence;*

thence; but what ſaith the word? the word it is nigh thee, even in thy mouth. Truſt to that. As if he ſhould ſay, Let no man think to know Gods decrees by going into heaven, and there ſearching into Gods decrees, for that he cannot do; but look upon the word, and there he ſhall find whom God hath elected, and decreed to ſave, 1 *Cor.* 2. 16. No man can know by looking barely upon the decree; but if we compare Gods decree with his word, and from the word look upon them that are elected, we may eaſily know whether we are elected or no. Which puts me upon the third head premiſed, How a man may be aſſured in his own ſoul, that he is elected to life and ſalvation by God the Father.

SERMON XIII.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

IN the proſecution of this ſubject, you may remember the laſt Doctrine I drew forth was this, *That Chriſtians ſhould put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſouls that they are eternally elected by God the Father.* In the handling of which, I have ſhewn you, 1. What Election is. 2. That the people of God may make ſure their own Election, though done from all eternity.

I come now to ſhew how the people of God may be aſſured in their own hearts that they are eternally elected. And here, to compaſſe this knowledge or aſſurance of our Election, I do not onely carry it ſo farre as the *Papiſts* do,

that ſay, you may have a perſwaſion, which they call *Fides conjecturalis*, a conjectural faith or hope you may be ſaved; but will not come up ſo far as the words of my Text, to be ſure of it. Now ſhould a man uſe no more then the words of the Text, in that it is preſſed as a command, it is an argument it may be made ſure to a mans own ſelf. For no man is bound to an impoſſible thing; and in that it is a thing required, to be aſſured of our election, the Scripture would never oblige our obedience to that which is impoſſible in it ſelf. I do not drive ſo far onely, but further. What ſhould an elect man do to be certainly perſwaded that he is eternally elected by God to obtain life and ſalvation? I am now handling a doctrine to be trembled at, while you are attending to it. And in the reſolving this quere, you muſt take this rule; that you cannot get aſſurance by aſcending into Gods decree, but by deſcending into your own hearts, ſearching them by the word, whether thoſe ſaving effects which God doth work in an elect perſon, be wrought in your ſouls or no: and that is the way to come to a ſure and certain knowledge of your election. The knowledge of your election is not attainable by aſcending into Gods decree; *For who hath made you his counſellors?* Nor is it enjoyned you by way of Revelation; That is an unſure ground, and you may run into. Enthuſiaſme as well as perſwaſion about your election. It is not done by Revelation, neither againſt nor without the word. What ever teſtimony there is, if it come not from the word, you may ſuſpect it to be a deluſion. Now the ſafeſt way (though I know much cryed down) for you to go by in ſearching whether you are in the number of Gods elect, is to ſearch into your own hearts, whether thoſe things be wrought in you, which are wrought in thoſe whom God hath elected to life and ſalvation: and here I ſhall content my ſelf with the naming of ſix ſaving effects.

Nemo tenetur & impoſſibile.

First, every man that is elected, ſooner or later, ſhall be effectually called, and ſavingly converted by the power of the word. This the Apoſtle laies down, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 4, 5. *Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God.* How ſhall this be known? Verſ. 5. *For our word came not to you in word onely, but in*

in power, and in the holy Ghoſt: that is, our Goſpel did not come in word onely, to affect your ears, and reſt there; but our word came with power, being backt with the operation of the Spirit, for your converſion. This work all men that are elected, ſooner or later muſt come under, to have the power of the word come with authority upon Conſcience, for his effectual calling. So *Rom.* 8. 30. *Whom he predeſtinated, whom he appointed to life, them he called.* And therefore, Beloved, who ever you are, if you live and die without having the power of the Word to paſs upon your ſoul, for your effectual Calling, you may lay your hearts under this Concluſion, that you are not elected by God to obtain life and ſalvation. For, *Whom he hath predeſtinated, them he calls.*

Secondly, a man that is elected by God to life, ſooner or later God will ſanctifie him by renewing and regenerating grace: And this is onely different from the former in degree: for calling is ſanctification begun. Now, when God elects a man, he doth not onely begin the work of grace, but he carries it on in a courſe of ſanctification. And of this you read, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 12, 13. *We are bold to give thanks to God alwaies for you, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* If God hath from the beginning choſen a man to ſalvation, the Lord doth it through ſanctification; not for ſanctification, as the *Papiſts* ſay, or for faith foreſeen, but it is through it, as a means whereby we are brought to ſalvation; ſanctification ſhall run through our lives, as water through a Channel. So 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. They that are *elected according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by Chriſt, through ſanctification.* So 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. And therefore, Beloved, if men live and dye and have not the power of ſanctifying grace upon their hearts and conſciences, and working in their lives, doubtleſs thoſe men are not elected; becauſe this you ſee clearely, that at one time or other God will work this in ſuch men. *Jude* 4.

Thirdly, men elected by God to life and ſalvation ſhall ſooner or later be brought into a ſtate of believing, *Acts* 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.* No man that is ordained to eternal life, but ſhall be brought to a believing eſtate.

estate. And therefore men living and dying in a state of unbelief, are not elected. Hence you read, *Tit.* 1. 1. it is called *the faith of Gods elect*; implying, that all that are elected, before they die shall have faith, and none shall have faith, but onely they; and therefore in a peculiar manner called *the faith of Gods elect*, appropriated onely to them.

Fourthly, That man that is elected, sooner or later before he dies, God will work in his heart a special delight in, and an entire love to the word preached. This you have expressed, *Iohn.* 8. 47. *He that is of God, heareth Gods word; therefore ye are not of God, because ye hear not his words.* To be of God, that is, to belong to God by election. Now, he that is of God, God will in time make him hear his word with delight and love, but he that takes no delight therein, is not elected of God. 1 *Iohn* 4. 5, 6.

Fifthly, The Lord will sooner or later work in the heart of an elect man, love to the people of God, and compassion to those who are not the elect and chosen ones of God, *Col.* 3. 12. *Put on as the elect of God, bowels of mercy and loving kindness.* The Apostle there by the manner of phrase doth seem to intimate thus much, *Put on as the elect of God, &c.* As if it were a thing ordained to, and inseparable from an elect man, after his effectual calling, that he should have bowels of mercy towards those that are not called; and that he should have loving kindness towards those that are called. For a man that is once elected, and hath the execution of that decree in effectual calling, it is proper to him to have bowels of mercy.

Sixthly, God will sooner or later work an elect man into a new course of living, and of obedience, from what he had in times past. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *You are elected according to the foreknowledg of God through sanctification to obedience*; that though you were disobedient before, serving divers lusts, yet God, if he hath chosen you, will bring you in a course of obedience, *Rom.* 8. 29. *He hath predestinated us.* What to do? *that we might be conformable to the image of his Son.* God intends, that that person whom he chooseth to life, should be conformable to Jesus Christ, and that he shall live another manner of life then before; that though he hath formerly been subject to sinne and

Satan,

Satan, yet then he ſhall walk in waies of obedience to Jeſus Chriſt.

Thus having briefly finiſht theſe heads, I have only foure or five cautions to lay down, to bound what hath been ſaid within the limits of truth. As,

Firſt, Take notice, that theſe ſix defects do not extend to children who die while they are children, but to men and women that are grown in years. A childe that cannot act reaſon, as he is a child, cannot have any of theſe particulars wrought in him, at leaſt in that way and manner men of years have. A child, as it is an infant, hath not converſion in that way a man hath, though it hath ſomewhat equivalent to it; as ſome what like ſanctification, and ſomewhat like that faith men of years have; but what that is, and how wrought, man cannot determine. In preſſing of this therefore, I ſay, it doth not extend to children who die in their infancy, but onely to men come to years of diſcretion, if they live and die without having theſe ſix effects, they may conclude, they cannot be elected.

Secondly, that the want of theſe ſix particulars for a time, is no Argument of a mans non-election; but before converſion (which is Gods firſt dealing with a ſinner) an elect man may be as vile and as bad as any wicked man alive. As the Apoſtle *Paul* tells us, *Titus* 3.3. *In times paſt we were alſo diſobedient, and ſerved divers luſts, and lived in pleaſure and exceſs, &c.* So 1 *Tim.* 1.12. So that the want of this for a time is no argument of a mans non-election, for then it would follow, a man unconverted is no elect man, which would croſſe the whole tenour of Scripture: But a man living and dying without theſe, doth not belong to the election of grace.

Thirdly, I do not preſs the having of theſe effects actually, if you have them habitually. My meaning is this: A man may be elected, and yet may not act any thing anſwerable to effectual calling, nor act with any delight and love to the word, nor any thing in a way of ſanctification; yet, if you have theſe habitually, in the habit of them, theſe may be teſtimonies or evidences of election.

Fourthly, I do not preſs the having of theſe effects ſenſibly

to

to be an evidence of election, if so be you have them really. There are many men have these really, when they have them not in their own apprehension.

Fifthly, I do not press the having of these effects gradually, so you have them sincerely. My meaning is this, that a man may be elected, yea, and he may not onely be chosen in Gods eternal decree, but the execution of that decree may be passed upon him, that he may be effectually called, and yet he may not have all these six effects in a great measure in the highest degree, yet he may have them sincerely, and so be a pledge to his own heart of his eternal election.

And thus having finished this third Quere, I come now to enter upon another, depending upon the former; which indeed is a very dreadful subject; and a point to be trembled at while it is handling, and that is this: what probable guess may be given of a man, that he is not within the compass of Gods election? This is a very high point, and must be handled with a great deal of seriousness and sadness, it being a point concerning the salvation or damnation of all the men upon earth. And therefore I would intreat you to look about you. Gods decrees they are in Heaven, and it is onely a reall work of grace upon your hearts on earth, that can give you evidence that those decrees are for good to you; As good wrought is an evidence of Gods purpose to save you, so the contrary work may be an evidence of Gods purpose never to save you, but of leaving you without the compasse of his eternal election. There can be nothing laid down absolutely and certainly, yet there may be many probable guesses given of the men that are not within the compass of Gods election: Of which I shall name but six or seven sorts. And I wish to God that none of you that are before the Lord this day, have your names written in this black book, lest you have just cause to fear your names are not written in the book of life.

First, That man that falls back from a course of profession to a course of profaneness, without timely returning; the Scripture gives a shrewd guess of such a man, that he is not within the compass of Gods purpose to save. I do not say, every backsliding, and every decaying affection, but a total

and

and final relapſe; when a man falls, and riſeth not again; when a man runs from God and returns not again, the Scripture giues a gueſſe at him, that he is not within the compaſſe of Gods election. *Heb.* 10.38, 39. *If any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* Interpreters obſerve, that in theſe words there is a figure, wherein there is leſſe expreſſed then is intended, *My ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* It is as much as if God ſhould have ſaid, My ſoul ſhall hate, or I will exceedingly hate him. *But we are not of them that draw back to perdition: but of them that believe, to the ſaving of their ſouls:* which words clearly import, that men that draw back without returning, they draw back to perdition, to damnation; but we are not of them, ſaith the Apoſtle. And here then, Beloved, doth this word fall upon any man before God this day? Haſt thou left a courſe of ſtrictneſſe, and fallen into a courſe of prophaneneſs and looſneſſe? Haſt thou fallen from thy God, and never thinkeſt of a returning? I ſhall not cenſure thee now, but if thou liveſt and dieſt in this eſtate, it is an undoubted argument, thou art not within the compaſs of Gods decree to ſave.

Secondly, Men that do make the mercies and goodneſs of God as arguments to embolden them the more in ſin, ſuch men are not likely to be the perſons whom God hath elected to life and glory. In the Epiſtle of *Iude*, v. 4. It is ſpoken there of *men that turned the grace of God into wantonneſs.* And what ſaith the Apoſtle of them? *they are men ordained of old to damnation.* The Scripture there makes it the badge of a man ordained of old to damnation, when he ſhall perſiſt in this ſinful temper, to turn Gods grace into laſciviouſneſs; that is, to take arguments from the grace, and mercy, and goodneſs of God to walk in waies of ſin. And therefore look to it, and with your hearts bewaile it, all you that are apt to abuſe doctrines of grace; and becauſe God is good you will be evil; becauſe God is merciful, therefore you will be ſinful; if you die in this temper, the Scripture declares, that you are the men ordained of old to condemnation.

Thirdly, a man that doth walk in a courſe of ſin, wilfully, with malice, and knowingly againſt conſcience, and obſtinately

narely without reluctancy; and perſiſt in this, and live and die thus, that man is not within the compaſs of Gods election. There is a phraſe, *Pſal.* 59.5. *Be not merciful, O Lord, unto wicked tranſgreſſors.* It is in ſome tranſlations, *be not merciful to them that ſin of wicked malice*, or *of malicious wickedneſs.* Now there is this rule which Divines give; that thoſe prayers which were made by *David*, they are rather Propheſies of what ſhould be, then meere prayers that this might be. As *David* prayed againſt the Jews, *Pſal.* 69.22. *that their table might be a ſnare to them, and that they ſhould alway bow down under their burden:* which was a propheſie, and they did ſo. And ſo he here prayes that God *would not be merciful to men that ſin of wicked malice*; which is as much as a propheſie, that God will not be merciful to men that ſin of malicious wickedneſs. And therefore, Beloved, all you that ſo live, and reſolve you will die, and haply do die, and yet ſin obſtinately; that, let God command what he can, you will do what you pleaſe; let the Miniſter ſay what he will, you will do what you liſt; that ſin againſt knowledge, and againſt conſcience, and without any reluctancy; reſolve to live and die in a courſe of ſin: the Lord be merciful to ſuch perſons; for certainly there muſt be no Bible, if ſuch men fall within the compaſſe of Gods election.

Fourthly, That man that by living under the powerful Miniſtry of the Word, is more hard in heart, and worſe in life; if a man grows thus, it is an argument he is not within the purpoſe of Gods election. *Matth.* 13.14,15. *By hearing you ſhall heare, but not underſtand; by ſeeing, you ſhall ſee, but not perceive; this peoples heart is waxed groſs, their ears dull in hearing, their eyes ſhut, leſt at any time they ſhould ſee with their eyes, hear with their ears, underſtand with their hearts, and be converted, and I ſhould ſave them.* Here is the judgement God laies upon ſuch ſinners, that they ſhall have eyes, and not ſee, they ſhall be ignorant, their hearts ſhall waxe groſs, they ſhall be uncapable of taking any impreſſion of the word upon them. And what's the end of all this? leſt they ſhould be converted, and I ſhould ſave them; implying, that if God lets you that live under the Miniſtry, to have dark eyes, and hard hearts, it is an argument God hath no intent to ſave you, and therefore his purpoſe

poſe is to condemn you. So *John* 12. 40. *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, leſt they ſhould ſee with their eyes, and underſtand with their hearts, and be converted.* Here is layd down an act of Gods, that God did harden their hearts, and God did blind their eyes, leſt they ſhould be converted; Implying, that if men do live and die in this temper, that they have lived year after year under a powerful Miniſtry, and yet they grow more blind in judgment, and more profane in life, and more hard in heart, after 20, 30, 40 years hearing, then they were before; that the word doth but draw out their wickedneſs, and makes them more profane, and more to oppoſe godlineſs; the Lord have mercy upon ſuch ſouls, for certainly if God leave you thus, it is an argument he never intends to ſave you; for the Lord doth thus with ſuch, that they might not be ſaved. There is a paſſage *Rom.* 11. 7. *Iſrael hath not obtained that which he ſeeks for, but the election hath obtained, and the reſt were hardened.* By election is meant the elected, (the abſtract put for the concrete.) As often in Scripture, Circumciſion put for Circumciſed; and ſo here, Election put for elected, *The elected have obtained it:* what did they obtain? they obtained ſalvation and glory; *but the reſt*, that were not elected, *they were hardened.* The Lord there makes it the badge of them that are not elected, that they are a blinded people, and a hardned people. Intimating that men that are not elected, they ſhall live under the word, yet ſhall be blind in mind, ſhall be hard in heart, ſhall be wicked in life, and the Miniſtry of the word ſhall never reforme them. And if any of you be ſuch; O that the Lord would make you tremble this day, tremble leſt you are not in Gods thoughts, to do you any good another day.

Fifthly, when God doth give up men to ſtrong deluſions, not only to believe lies themſelves, but to teach lies to ſeduce others, when the Lord leaves them to live and die in that eſtate, the Scripture makes it an argument of them that are not choſen by God to life and glory. You ſhall read therefore in that great deluſion of Antichriſt, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11, 12. *God gave them up to ſtrong deluſions, to believe lies, that all might be damned that believe not the truth.* It is made a brand of damnation,

when God ſhall give them over to believe lies. Though a godly man may dye in a corrupt opinion, for every error is not a badge of damnation; but errours that are fundamental, that ſtrike at the foundation of Religion, wherein men runne ſo far, as never to repent of their errour, that the Scripture makes the badge of a man whoſe ſoul is in a world of danger. Read that Text, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2, 3. *There were falſe Prophets among the people, like as there ſhall be falſe teachers among you.* And who are they? verſe 2. *They ſhall deny the Lord that bought them, they ſhall bring in damnable hereſies.* (Every errour is not an hereſie,) but theſe men ſhall bring in damnable hereſies, *and many ſhall follow their pernicious waies.* Now what is their cenſure? *whoſe judgement now of a long time lingers not, and their damnation ſlumbers not.* Their damnation was not aſleep, but for a long time damnation did attend them, and they were in danger of it. So that, Beloved, it is great danger for men to be patrons of errour, eſpecially when they are groſs and palpable; and when in Scripture language they may be called damnable hereſies. It is an argument, if men live and die thus, that they are not within the purpoſe of Gods Counſel to do them good.

Sixthly, Men that live and die in a continual ſpurning and oppoſition againſt the Goſpel, and word of God powerfully preached, it is a dreadful ſign they are not within the compaſs of Gods election. 1 *Iohn* 4. 5, 6. *You are not of God, for you hear not his word.* So *Iohn* 12. *He that heareth the word, is of God, but you hear not his word, therefore you are not of God.* Therefore you belong not to him. But more pregnant to this purpoſe, is that place, *Act.* 13. 46, 47, 48. *It was neceſſary the word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken to you, but ſeeing you put it from you, and judge your ſelves unworthy of everlaſting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* Now compare this with verſe 48. *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.* The oppoſition lies thus: As many as God purpoſed to ſave, they glorified God for his word, and they rejoyced, and were glad in his word: but thoſe that were not decreed to ſalvation, they put off from them the word of the Lord, they ſpurned at

it, and oppoſed it, and could not endure the word of the Lord. Therefore the Text ſaith, *The Iews ſtirred up the devout and honourable women, and they raiſed up perſecution againſt Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coaſt.* It was ſaid to *Amaziah*, 2 *Chron.* 25. 16. *By this I know, that the Lord hath purpoſed to deſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt not hearkened to my counſel.* Thus you ſee the Scripture makes it the badge of a man that doth not fall within the compaſs of Gods election, to bring him to life and glory, to live and die in oppoſition to the word of God.

Seventhly, and this we may ſpeak more confidently and poſitively, that that man is not within the compaſs of Gods election, who ſinnes the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, *Matth.* 12. 32. *He ſhall neither be forgiven in this life, nor in the life to come.* This is an unpardonable ſin, 1 *Ioh.* 5. 16. Now I know there are many men, who confine this ſin onely to the Phariſees, as if they onely were guilty of it. There are others that ſay this ſin is ſeldome committed; and ſo many Divines ſpeak favourably of it: but Beloved, I am perſwaded, this ſin is oftner committed, then moſt men in the world dream of; and many men are plunged into this ſin, that think well of their own ſouls. The ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt is onely this:

It is a wilful and deliberate act in a profeſſor of Religion, whereby he doth not onely fall from his profeſſion, but he runs into a courſe of ſin knowingly, againſt conſcience; obſtinately, againſt counſel; and maliciouſly, againſt Jeſus Chriſt. This is briefly a deſcription of this ſin. Now I am perſwaded there are many in the world that have profeſſed Religion, that are, if not in this ſinne, yet at the very next door to it. And if a man be gone thus farre, this is called in Scripture, *a ſin unto death*; a ſin, which if a man fall into, he may be ſure he ſhall be damned. And thus I have in brief given you an account of theſe ſeven particulars, whereby every man may give a gueſs in his own thoughts, whether he be within the purpoſe of Gods election unto ſalvation or no.

I have now, from this ſad Doctrine, onely a few comfortable poſitions to lay down, and ſo conclude. As,

1. That though theſe particulars may give you a gueſs of thoſe

those that are not within the compass of Gods election, yet no man is bound to make this sure to himself, that he is not elected. You are bound to make your election sure, but you are not bound to make your reprobation sure. For these heads I have given out, not to make any godly man question his election, but to startle wicked men, who live quite contrary, and opposite to the elect of God.

2. That a man may come very nigh to the worst of these sins, and yet may be an elected man. *We were* (saith *Paul*) *sometimes disobedient, deceived, and served divers lusts*, Titus 3. 3. And Eph. 2. 2. *In times past you walked according to the course of the world, according to the power of the prince of the aire, who worketh mightily in the children of disobedience.* In times past ye were children of wrath, as well as others. In times past before calling, you may come very neer to these evils, yet be within the compass of Gods election, Provided that you do not live and die in those evils; For if so, there is no hope of mercy.

3 That for men to question their election, meerly because they do not find the saving effects of election in their hearts and lives, is rather an argument of their being, then of their not being elected. Because men not elected, they never look after their election to make it sure, they will trust all upon the mercy of God, and grace of God, and never look after holiness; sin never troubles them, profaneness never grieves them, want of holiness perplexes not them. The questioning therefore of your election arising from the evils of your conversation, is rather a sign that God hath chosen you to life and glory.

4. Election it runnes often times to those that are the worst sort of men in the world. Election runnes to them that have been worst in their lives before they were called: And thereby God magnifies the riches of his grace. Election passeth by civil honest men, and ingenious temperate men, and commonly runs to men that have been scandalous, loose, Atheistical, profane livers before they were called. *Matth.* 21. 31. *Whores and Harlots shall come to Heaven before you. Manasseh*, that was a cruel murderer and idolater, yet election ran to him. *Mary Magdalen*, a common strumpet, out of whom Christ cast seven

Devils,

Devils, yet election ran to her. *Rahab*, an Harlot; *Paul*, a perſecuter, a blaſphemer, a man injurious to the ſaints; yet *Acts 9. 15. He was a choſen veſſel unto God*, and obtained mercy. God to magnifie the riches of his free grace, lets election run to the worſt of men that are in the world. And this ſhould be great comfort to you; though you have been drunkards, and though you have been Sabbath-breakers and adulterers, and though you have been profane, yet if you can but now cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt, and look after heaven, if you can but now mourn over your condition, and repent of your former failings, and come in to Jeſus Chriſt; Election hath run unto men as bad as you, and though you may be now men profane in your lives, yet you may be objects of Gods election.

SERMON XIV.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

THe laſt Doctrine I drew from theſe words was this, *That Chriſtians ſhould put forth a great deal of diligence, to make this ſure to their ſouls, that they are eternally elected by God to life and glory.* In the proſecution of which, I have gone over ſome queries. There are four difficulties or queries I am further to inſiſt upon in treating of this point. As namely,

Firſt, whether this election be univerſal or no?

Secondly, whether a man that is once elected by God to ſalvation, may come to be damned, yea or no?

Thirdly, whether God, in electing a man to life and glory, doth

doth it out of any foreſight of faith, or any other grace he ſees in man?

And fourthly, whether this doctrine of election, that God in his own counſel hath determined who ſhall be damned, and who ſaved, doth not take men off from any endeavours after their own ſalvation, to make them deſperate, and neglect the uſe of means; that they ſhall ſay, if I ſhall be damned, I ſhall be damned; and if ſaved, I ſhall be ſaved, let me live as I liſt? whether this doctrine will favour this deſperate concluſion, yea, or no?

Firſt, whether election be univerſal, or no? This is that the *Arminians* and *Papiſts* do mightily drive at. And here they lay down this concluſion, which they make unqueſtionable: That there is ſuch a thing as a certain univerſal election of God, without limitation or reſtraint of perſons, whereby God did determine to ſave all mankind by Chriſt, who were fallen in *Adam*. This opinion was firſt drawn from *Origen*, who held that all creatures ſhould be ſaved; and the *Papiſts* and *Arminians* mincing the matter, to make it a little more plauſible then he did, they ſay, that God in his purpoſe did intend to ſave all mankind by Jeſus Chriſt; but men falling away, and walking contrary to their principles, the defect lies in them, that they are not ſaved: and this Divines call univerſal redemption.

Now againſt this, I ſhall lay down ſeveral Scriptures, and then take off the objections that ſeem to ſtrengthen this opinion.

Firſt, for Scripture. In the Epiſtle of *Iude*, verſ. 3. you read of *ſome that were ordained of old to condemnation*; therefore ſure all could not be ſaved. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 9. *Some men are appointed to wrath, but we do obtain ſalvation through Ieſus Chriſt*. Therefore all men could not be within the purpoſe of Gods firſt intention to ſave. *Matth.* 22. 14. *Many are called, but few are choſen*. So *Rom.* 11. 7. *The Iews did not obtain what they ſought for, but the elect obtain it, and the reſt were hardened.* 2 Tim. 2. 20. *There are veſſels of honour, and veſſels of diſhonour*. The Scripture makes it a diſcriminating act in God that ſome he choſe to life, and others from eternity in his counſel he choſe to wrath and condemnation.

condemnation. And theſe Scriptures will fully overthrow this opinion. And indeed the very word *chuſing* confutes it, which intimates a taking off ſome, with an overlooking of others.

But now let us view a little the Arguments of Scriptures they abuſe, to ſtrengthen this unſound opinion of theirs.

One is, 1 *Cor.* 15. 22. *As in Adam all died, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* Now, ſay they, Every man did die in *Adam*; every mothers child by *Adams* fall became ſubject to death: even ſo, in Chriſt ſhall every man be made alive; the Lord did intend that every man ſhould have benefit by Jeſus Chriſt.

Now to take off this; I ſhall anſwer it in ſhewing you the true intent and ſcope of this Scripture. This univerſal phraſe of making alive, hath not reference to the ſaving of the ſoul, but to the reſurrection of the body: And ſo the ſenſe is this. That as in *Adam*, by vertue of his ſin, every man came to die a natural death; So in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive; that is, ſo by Chriſts power ſhall every man riſe from the dead. And if you ask how I make that appear to be the intendment of the Text; I anſwer, the words themſelves will make it plain. Verſ. 11. It is ſaid, *By man came death, by man alſo came the reſurrection from the dead*: that is, as by that man *Adam* came death, ſo by that man Chriſt, ſhall come the reſurrection from the dead: *for as in Adam all died*, &c. ſo that here you ſee, this is brought in as a proof of the 21. verſe: Intimating that this being made alive hath no reference to the life of the ſoul, but onely to the Reſurrection of the body; that as *Adam* by his ſin brought death to all men, ſo Chriſt by his power ſhall raiſe all men from the dead; *every man in his own order.* However, ſhould this be granted, that this making alive ſhould have reference to the life of the ſoul; it would bear no more but this, that all that are damned, are damned as in *Adams* loines; and all that are ſaved, ſhall be ſaved as in the loins of Jeſus Chriſt: And ſo make nothing at all to prove this which they call univerſal election.

Another Scripture (undeniable they think) is, *Rom.* 11. 32. where it is ſaid, *God hath concluded all men under unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.* Now ſay they, if God did do an

act to make men ſee their unbelief, and did intend by this action to have mercie upon all, then God in his counſel intended to ſave all.

Now to this, *that he might have mercy upon all*; I anſwer: This phraſe (*all*) is not to be taken in an unlimited ſence, that *God ſhut up all men in unbelief*; that is, God made all believers ſee their own miſery, that he might have mercy on all them that believe. And if you ask how I prove this to be the meaning of the Text, I anſwer: The Scripture makes it clear, *Gal.* 3. 22. *The Scripture hath concluded all men under ſin.* (The very words forequoted.) But what's the limitation? Shall all men be ſaved? No. For mark the next words; *The Scripture hath concluded all men under ſin, that the faith of Ieſus Chriſt ſhould be given to them that believe.* Now, though *Paul* doth not ſay thus to the *Romans*, yet the words being the ſame, the Reſtriction holds good in both places. So that it is clear, *That he might ſave all*, or *have mercy upon all.* It is not meant all univerſally; but all, with the limitation of *Paul* here; all *them that believe.* Again,

Another objection, or Scripture, they abuſe is, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. *Who will have all men to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.* This Text *Origen* doth groſly abuſe; holding hence, that it is the intendment and will of God, that all men ſhould be ſaved. Now, to take off this objection; We muſt firſt diſtinguiſh here of Gods will, and then of this phraſe, *All. Who will have all men to be ſaved.*

Firſt, of Gods will; and the Schoolemen give this diſtinction about it. That there is a will of Gods good pleaſure; and there is Gods ſignifying will.

Now the will of Gods good pleaſure is, that real purpoſe in God to ſave a man. And there is no man that in this ſenſe God wills to be ſaved, but he muſt be ſaved; but in this ſenſe God wills not all men to be ſaved.

But ſecondly, there is Gods ſignificative will, that is, whereby in Scripture God tenders ſalvation to every man that will lay hold upon Jeſus Chriſt: and ſo Gods ſignifying will excludes no man from ſalvation; but the Miniſters, if they preach to ten thouſand people, they muſt tender Chriſt univerſally

to

to all, becauſe they know not which of them are elect, and which reprobate; which of them ſhall be ſaved, and which damned. This is Gods ſignifying will, and though God by this will tell you what Miniſters muſt do, to tender Chriſt and ſalvation to all; yet this doth no way follow, that the determinate will of Gods good pleaſure is involved under this, as if all men ſhould be ſaved. *Perkins* in his writings hath this diſtinction of it; That there is Gods abſolute will, and ſo he wills not all men to be ſaved: and Gods conditionate will, that in caſe every man did believe, they ſhould be ſaved; for God envies no mans ſalvation; there is grace enough in God to ſave every man in the world.

But ſecondly, there may be a more diſtinct anſwer given to this place, *God will have all men to be ſaved. All*, is taken ſometimes in a diſtributive ſenſe, and ſometimes in a collective ſenſe. In a diſtributive ſenſe, for every man under heaven; and ſo God wills not all men to be ſaved. But ſecondly, in a collective ſenſe, for all ſorts and degrees of men; and ſo God intends to ſave all; that is, ſome of all ſorts, and of all degrees of men in the world. And this appears if you mark the context, *He will have all men to be ſaved*, that is, ſome of all ſorts. Some Kings, ſome great men, ſome rich, and ſome poor, ſome Princes, and ſome beggers. And therefore the Apoſtle bids them pray for all men. *Pray*, ſaith he, *for Kings, and for them in authority: for God will have all men to be ſaved.* As much as if he ſhould ſay, Pray for Kings, becauſe God of his grace may ſave Kings as well as poorer men, that have leſſe incumbrances, and leſſe imployments in the world, and leſſe withdrawings in their own ſoul then they have. God will ſave all: ſalvation ſhall come to all ſorts of men, and therefore you may lawfully pray for them. And ſo *Calvin* judiciouſly expounds this place; that God will have all ſorts of men to obtain ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt: but it is not to be extended univerſally, as if every individual man and woman ſhould be ſaved. 3. Theſe words are to be taken with thoſe that follow after, *God will have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledg of the truth.* Now that God will be willing to ſave thoſe that come to the knowledge of the truth, is unqueſtionable;

queſtionable; all that repent, *Acts* 17. 30. all oppoſition to the time of the old Teſtament, *Rom.* 16. 25.

Uſe Now, is this true, that election is not univerſal; but that ſome men are elected, and others reprobated? Then, to wrap up this quere in a ſhort uſe; this ſhould teach you all who are in the Land of the living, not to deceive your ſelves; Lull not your ſelves aſleep in ſecurity, for it may be, you may be in Gods counſel to ſave, it may be not. Peradventure you may be in Gods thoughts for ſalvation, peradventure you may be in his counſel for damnation; and this ſhould put you upon the work my text calls upon you for, to endeavour *to make your calling and election ſure.*

2. A ſecond Quere in this; Whether may one that is an elect man, fall away from his election, and come to be a damned man, or no? This the Proteſtant Divines againſt the *Arminians* and *Papiſts* have had large controverſies about: but I will not handle it in a controverſial way; only as it beſt becomes a Pulpit, ſhew you thoſe poſitive Scriptures and reaſons that may clear the truth, and then anſwer the ſtrongeſt objections they produce to the contrary.

Queſt. Whether may a man that is elected fall away, and afterward periſh? To this I anſwer. No. A man that is once elected by God can never periſh. And this I ſhall give Scripture, and reaſon to plead for it. *Matth.* 24. 24. Chriſt tells us of errour, that it came in ſo eaſily, *that if it were poſſible, it would deceive the elect.* Intimating, that it is impoſſible ſo to ſeduce the elect, as to make them finally fall away. So, *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father hath given me, ſhall come unto me*: that is, all that God the Father hath decreed to ſave by Chrſt, ſhall come unto Chriſt. Verſe 39. *This is the Fathers will that hath ſent me, that of all that he hath given me, I ſhould loſe none.* This is the Fathers will and Commiſſion to Chriſt, that of all thoſe that by his decree he had given to Chriſt to ſave by redemption, he ſhould loſe none. And ſaith Chriſt, *I have loſt nothing.* So *John* 10. 28, 29. *I give unto my ſheep eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any man take them out of my hands; my Father that gave them me is greater then all, & no man ſhall pluck them out of my Fathers hands.* By his Fathers hands, he

he means his decree; God by his decree intended to ſave ſo many, and Chriſt to vindicate his Father, tels us, that ſo many as God the Father had decreed to ſalvation, neither man nor Devil ſhould prevail to pluck them out of his Fathers hand. So *Rom.* 11.1. *God hath not caſt away his people whom he foreknew.* That is, whom God did predeſtinate, he caſts none of them away, none of them ſhall periſh. Many more Scripures I might multiply, to ſhew, that a man once elected, can never periſh; as 2 *Tim.* 2.19. 1 *Cor.* 1. 8, 9. 2 *Theſ.* 3.3. But I would name reaſons as well as Scriptures. And.

Firſt, if election were changable, then God muſt be changeable; which to think, there is nothing more abſurd. If Gods decree be changeable, Gods eſſence and nature were ſo alſo; election being nothing elſe, but God himſelfe chuſing, for every thing in God, is God. And this the Scripture tels us, is far from him; for *there is no variableneſs or ſhadow of change in God.* *Jam.* 1.17. *Iſa.* 46.10. *Mal.* 3.6.

Secondly, if the elect could periſh, then Jeſus Chriſt ſhould be very unfaithful to his Father, becauſe God the Father hath give this charge to Chriſt. that whomſoever he elected, Chriſt ſhould preſerve them ſafe, to bring them to heaven. Now ſhould not this be accompliſhed, Chriſt would be unfaithful to his Father. *John* 6.39. *This is the Fathers will, which hath ſent me into the world, that of all that he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing; but that I ſhould raiſe them up at the laſt day.* This is the will of God, to ſave many by Chriſt. Now, ſhould not this be made good, Chriſt muſt need be unfaithful to the Commiſſion of his father.

Thirdly, ſhould this be true, then *Pauls* golden chain ſhould be broken, *Rom.* 8.30. *Whom he did predeſtinate, them he calls; Whom he calls, them he juſtifies; whom he juſtifies, them he glorifies.* Now. ſhould this chain break, that whom he elects, them he calls, whom he calls, them he juſtifies, and there ceaſe (as the *Papiſts* hold) and men be after damned, then the great and main links would be loſt, that whom he juſtifies, them he glorifies; and ſo bring an abſurdity upon the Scripture thereby.

Now to anſwer ſome texts of Scripture they abuſe, (which at firſt view you would think very plauſible) to maintain, that

a man may be an elect man, and brought unto Chriſt, yet afterward damned. The firſt is, *Iohn 6. 70. Have not I choſen twelve, and one of them is a Devil?* Now ſay they, there were twelve choſen, or elected, and one of them is a devil, did periſh; intimating, that men may be elected, yet periſh for all this. To which I anſwer.

There is a double Electing. Firſt, a chuſing to ſome peculiar Office. Secondly, there is an electing to grace, life, and glory. Now, when Chriſt ſaith, *Have I not choſen you twelve?* it is meant of his chuſing of them to an Office, to the place of an Apoſtle, to be his diſciples. Now it is true, that a man may be choſen to ſome peculiar Office in the Church of God, and yet be a periſhing and damned man; but this phraſe hath no relation to the decree of God from eternity, only to a temporal electing of twelve men to a temporal Office, to the Office of an Apoſtle.

Another Scripture they abuſe, is, *Exod. 32. 32.* it was *Moſes* prayer, *If thou wilt not* (ſaith *Moſes* to God) *forgive their ſins, then blot my name out of the book of life.* Now, ſay they, *the book of life* is Gods election: and here *Moſes* prayed, *that God would blot his name out of the book of life.* Intimating, ſay they, a man may be elected and written in that book, and yet afterward blotted out and periſh,

To which I anſwer. That this prayer of *Moſes* is only a wiſh or ſuppoſition, as *Pauls* was, when he wiſht *he were accurſed from Chriſt, for his kindred in the fleſh.* Now a man may ſuppoſe mountains of Gold, and ſuppoſe things that never were, nor never ſhall be in being: bare ſuppoſitions put nothing in being; ſo here, that *Moſes* makes a ſuppoſition in a patherical prayer, this doth no way argue, as if his name could be blotted out of the book of life.

Secondly; *Rivet* he expounds it thus, that there is a double book of life. The book of life being ſometimes taken for the eternal counſel and decree of God, as *Phil. 4. 3.* ſometimes for the ſpecial providence of God over men, in preſerving them amongſt the living. So we read *Pſal. 139. In thy book*, ſaith *David, were all my members written*: meaning, not in the book of Gods decree, but only in the book of his providence, that all the

the members of *Davids* body, they were all under the providence of God, that none could hurt him. And ſo *River*, with others, thinks, that by the book of life here is meant, that God would blot out *Moſes* from the book of his ſpecial protection, and let him die as other men, rather then this evil ſhould come upon the people of *Iſrael. q. d.* Deſtroy my name from among men, and do not protect me any longer.

Again, they object that in *Pſal.* 69. 28. it is ſaid, *Let them be blotted out of the book of life.* Now, ſay they, That is Gods election, and to be blotted out, implies, that a man may be elected, and yet periſh.

To this I anſwer, as formerly, that the book of life in that place hath no reference to the decree of Gods Election, but onely to his book of providence, that God would not protect wicked men, as he doth his own people, in a way of providence. And other phraſes in Scripture will ſomewhat favour this interpretation. As *Ezek.* 13. 9. *They ſhall not be written in the writings of the houſe of Iſrael.* Whats that? *i. e.* let them not any more be thought Iſraelites, nor numbred among the people. And *Ainſworth*, I remember, compares *Pſal.* 69. 19. with this place in *Ezek.* 13. 9. and he makes the ſenſe to be one and the ſame; that to be blotted out of the book of life, is nothing elſe then to be out of Gods protection; to be blotted out of the catalogue of the living, and have ones life in danger to be brought to death. And this wiſh *David* wiſhed for thoſe wicked men.

But then they object further from *Rev.* 22. 19. *If any man ſhall take away from the words of this book, God ſhall take away his part in the book of life.* Here, ſay they, by book of life is unqueſtionably meant Gods decree; and the Scripture ſaith, *They that take any thing from this book, God will blot them out of the book of life*, and will undoubtedly damn them.

To which I anſwer. I confeſs in this place the book of life is taken for Gods decree; and that a man may be ſaid to be blotted out of this book, and yet this no way follow, that a man elected may be damned. And here let me give you *Auſtins* words upon the place, which is a very cleare and ſatisfactory anſwer: that a man may be ſaid to be blotted out of the book

of

of life in two regards: Firſt, it is equivalent to this phraſe, that his name ſhall never be written in the book of Life. And you have often ſuch phraſes in Scripture. As it is ſaid in *Matthew, He that doth evil himſelf, and teacheth men ſo to do, he ſhall be leaſt in the Kingdome of heaven.* Intimating, not as if he ſhould come to heaven, but that he ſhould not come there at all. To be leaſt there, is never to be there. So here, to be blotted out is equivalent to this that they were never in.

Secondly, A mans name may be ſaid to be blotted out of the book of life, not as if it were there in deed and in truth, but in their own opinion; they thought they were elected, and thought their names were written there, they had ſtrong conceits of this; and though they are now deluded and miſtaken, yet God will make them know one day, when they are in hell, that their names are blotted out of the book of life. Again,

Another Scripture they abuſe is, 1 *Cor.* 10. 12. *Let him that thinks he ſtands, take heed leſt he fall.* Now, ſay they, if it were not poſſible for a man elected to fall, and fall finally, to what end is this caution of the Apoſtle? it were a needleſs caution, were it not poſſible to come to paſs.

To which I anſwer two things. Firſt, the Apoſtle doth not ſay, Let him that ſtands, take heed leſt, &c. but the Apoſtle ſaith, *Let him that thinks he ſtands, take heed leſt he fall.* Intimating, that men that think they are elected, and think they are in a good condition, they ſhould take heed leſt they miſcarry to all eternity.

Secondly, *Take heed leſt they fal.* This falling here is not meant a falling from grace finally: and falling into hell, and periſhing; but the falling here is onely a falling into ſinne, and ſo an elect man ſhould do. An elect man, though he ſtand firme in Gods decree, yet he ſhould take heed all the dayes of his life, that he fall not into ſinne. And if you aske me, how I make that appear, I anſwer, from the context. This is a concluſion, or caution the Apoſtle gives upon the enumeration of ſeveral inſtances of the people of God, that in former ages did ſin againſt God. *As ſome that tempted Chriſt,*

and

and fell in one day 23000. Others that fell to fornication, and provoked him in the wilderneſs; with many ſuch ſins reckoned up: and the ſumme of all is this, that ſeeing they that were Gods people fell into ſin and were puniſhed, therefore you that think you ſtand, and think you are elected, you ſhould take heed you fall not into ſin as they did. And thus I have done with reſolving this ſecond query.

Thirdly, whether doth God elect any man to life and ſalvation upon foreſight of his faith or good works; foreſeeing that this man will believe, therefore I elect him to ſalvation; and the other man will not believe, therefore I chooſe him to damnation? Whether, I ſay, doth God in his eternal decree elect any man to life upon foreſight of works. Here the *Papiſts* and *Arminians* joyn both together in maintaining of this. The reaſon, ſay they, why God elects ſome and not others, is becauſe God did foreſee from eternity that that man would be holy, and would belive in Chriſt, and therefore God elected him to ſalvation. Theſe are the hard imputations they lay to Gods charge. Q.

And in the reſolving of this, I ſhall anſwer it in the Negative. That God, in electing a certain number of men to life and ſalvation, did not do it upon the foreſight of any good works he ſaw would be in them; whether Faith, Repentance, Sanctification, or any other grace. Indeed it is true, the *Papiſts* many of them do not groſly ſay that it was foreſight of good works in general, but the foreſight of faith onely, and ſo the *Arminians*.

But now, to overthrow this ungrounded opinion, Firſt, I ſhall lay down Scriptures to confirm this, that God in electing of men to ſalvation, doth not do it upon foreſight of good works, and then lay down reaſons; and after that take off thoſe objections which ſeem to darken this truth.

Firſt, for the Scriptures that confirm this, we have *Rom.* 11.5. *He hath ſaved a remnant according to the election of grace.* Intimating, that the remnant that are ſaved, it is onely of grace, not of foreſeen works. So *Eph.* 1. 5,11. *He hath elected us according to the good pleaſure of his will.* Gods meer good will was the impulſive cauſe of mans election, and nothing in man.

So likewise, *Rom.* 2.11. *That Gods election might stand not according to our works, but according to the good pleasure of him that called us.* So 2 *Tim.* 1.9. *Not of works, but according to his own purpose and grace.* Upon his good pleasure, and his good will to mankind, upon that ground election stands.

But now to adde some reasons why it cannot be that God should determine in his own councel, to save man upon the foresight of his works. I shall name four or five. As,

First, because the inferiour priviledges that God bestows upon his peoples, as vocation, and justification, are not for their good works (though they are in actual being) therefore much less is election for good works onely foreseen. First, for Vocation, 2 *Tim.* 1.19. *We are called, not according to our own works, but according to the purpose of his own grace.* And then for Justification, we are not justified for works neither: *Rom.* 3.24. *We are justified freely by his grace, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* Now, if vocation and justification be not for works, much, less is election for works, and for works, foreseen, not being actually in us.

Secondly, because then it would follow, that children dying in infancy could not be elected; for the child being in the mothers womb, if it hath life, it hath a soul, and so must either be saved, or damned. But a child, while it is in the womb, neither acts good or evil. Now if God did elect persons to life upon foresight of works, then children dying in the womb could not be elected; because there are no works God could foresee in them. And then this would be a very uncomfortable doctrine for parents that have children dying young.

Thirdly, then would man have somewhat whereof to boast before his God, as if he could lay claim to salvation from him. If God were bound to choose men to salvation upon foresight of good works, then man might say, I thank not God, but I thank my believing, and thank my good works, for these were the motives for which he chose me to glory; and thus would poor man boast against his Maker.

Fourthly, Because God hath elected the worst of men; when others that have more natural worth and gooness are passed

paſſed by. 1 *Cor.* 1. 27, 28. *God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe, and God hath choſen the weak things of the world, &c. and baſe things of the world, and things that are deſpiſed hath God choſen, &c.* And *Matth.* 11.25. *I thank thee O Father, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes.* Thoſe that had the greateſt worldly wiſdome, and natural abilities, that moſt excelled in outward ſtrictneſs, and moral vertues, are rejected, when thoſe that are but babes in underſtanding, who many times are the worſt for their moralities, are elected; which is a clear demonſtration, that election is not grounded upon faith, or works foreſeen; for then the beſt had been choſen before the reſt.

Fifthly, Our works carry no proportion to what God hath elected us unto; we are elected to eternal glory, but our works are finite, imperfect, no more then our duty, yea not done by our own ſtrength, but by the power of Gods grace, and therefore cannot be that which moveth God to elect us.

Sixthly, becauſe God doth not chuſe men to life for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt, therefore much leſs for their works ſake.

It is true, and miſtake me not, I confeſs, (and ſo all Divines that are confeſs this) that God ſaves a man for Chriſts ſake, but God elects not a man for Chriſts ſake, but meerly for his own good pleaſures ſake. God in chuſing a man to life, hath no referrence to Chriſt, as if Chriſt were the motive. Chriſt was predeſtinated himſelf, therefore could not be the cauſe of our predeſtination, 1 *Pet.* 1.20. We are choſen in him, its true, *Eph.* 1.4. as the common perſon; God elected Chriſt firſt in order, and all believers in him, but it is not for Chriſts ſake, but according to his own will. As ſuppoſe a Kingdome to be newly ſet up, a King is choſen, and his ſucceſſors to follow after; why then all the ſucceeding Kings are choſen in him that was firſt elected: ſo are we choſen in Chriſt. God doth chuſe a man as freely, as if Chriſt did never die; and yet God ſaves none, but for Chriſts ſake; and this makes election on Gods part moſt free. God doth not conſider Chriſt, nor the good works we have, but tis only his own good will engages him to ſave ſome, and neglect others. And thus much for proving

this point. There are some objections now that lie in the way which must be removed.

God, say they, doth elect men upon the foresight of their good works; and they alledge four Scriptures to prove this. *Iames* 2.2. *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith?* now, say they, their laying out their estates for good uses, and so becoming poor, that is the reason why God chuseth them, and neglects richer men.

To which I answer; That poor here is only spoken of as the quality of the persons that are chosen, not as the cause wherefore they are chosen. And this answer Mr. *Perkins* gives, that poverty is not the cause why, but the the description of the persons that are chosen, that Gods decree of election doth commonly run among the poorer sort of men; the more to advance his own grace; that man shall not say, election is entailed upon works: for if poverty should be the cause of their election, then all that are poor should be elected, which is false. Again, further they object,

2 *Thes.* 2.13. *God from the beginning hath chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* Now say they, sanctification, and faith is made as the channel through which election must run, and therefore that is the cause or motive why God did elect them. To this we answer.

That it is true, God elects men through sanctification and faith, as the end God aimes at in elect persons, not as the motive for which he elects them. And this answer *Rivet* gives. All elect men shall be sanctified, & all elect men shall believe; though it is not for this sanctification and belief that they are elected. It is not for grace, but unto grace they are chosen. This distinction the Scripture gives, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Ye are elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification unto obedience.* Not for, as the motive; but to, as the end.

Again, *Tit.* 1. 1. it is called *the faith of Gods elect.* Now, say they, it is called so, because God elects them foreseeing their faith. To which we answer.

That faith is here called the faith of Gods Elect, not as if God foreseeing faith did elect men, but because all elect men shall believe; because faith is a peculiar priviledge belonging

longing onely to elect men, therefore it is called their faith.

And then laſtly, one Scripture more they alledge, 2 *Tim.* 2. 20. *If any man ſhall purge himſelf from ſin, he ſhall be a veſſel of honour.* Now here, ſay they, *purging*, that is, ſanctification, and good works, it is made a condition of election, of being a veſſel of honour. God makes this condition, if he foreſee a man will purge himſelf, and will live holily, that man ſhall be elected, ſhall be a veſſel of honour. To which we give this anſwer, That purging, and ſanctification is here laid down, not as the cauſe, but as the ſigne of their election; not as the cauſe why men are veſſels of honour, but the ſigne or evidence that they are ſo. If you are purged, you ſhall be veſſels of honour; that is, if you are ſanctified, it is a ſign to you that you are elected.

SERMON XV.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.

THE laſt Concluſion or Doctrine drawn from theſe words was this, *That Chriſtians ſhould put forth a great deal of diligence to make this ſure to their ſoules, that they are eternally elected by God to life and glory.* In the proſecution of which, I have diſpatched ſeveral queries. I am now to proceed further in the diſpatch of what yet remains to be ſpoken concerning this ſubject. A fourth querie follows.

Fourthly, Whether the decree of Election, or Gods purpoſe to ſave a company of men, being from eternity, and being Q.

ing immutable, whether doth not this give way to man to be ſecure, and careleſs in the uſe of the means of grace, that they take no care to get grace, and to get heaven, while they are in the world? This is a very uſe ful point to inſiſt upon, ſeeing the *Arminians* charge us with this, that if we hold election without reſpect to Gods foreſight of works in men, then this laies open a gap for men to live as they liſt; that they ſay, If God hath determined they ſhall be ſaved, they ſhall be ſaved; if that they ſhall be damned, they ſhall be damned, whether they are holy, or profane; if God hath elected them to life, they ſhall be ſaved, let them live as they liſt. Thus the *Arminians* plead. This therefore is the quere, whether this doctrine of election doth adminiſter any ground for ſuch a cavil as this to be in the minds of men?

To anſwer which, I ſhall firſt lay down this general Concluſion, that the decree, or the purpoſe of God about the election of man to life and ſalvation, doth no way adminiſter any juſt ground to men, to make them live as they liſt, and to make them neglect the means of grace and ſalvation. In the clearing of which, I ſhall lay down three particulars, to ſatisfie you about this matter. As,

Firſt, that Gods decree about Civil and Temporal matters, doth no way give encouragement to men to neglect the uſe of means, and live careleſs of the accompliſhment of his decree; and therefore not ſo in ſpiritual. As now for inſtance: God hath determined from all eternity, how long every one of us ſhall live in the world; our dayes are numbred in his counſel. Now, though God hath determined how long we ſhall live, this no way gives us encouragement to ſay therefore I will never put one a rag of cloathes to cover me in Winter, and I will never put a morſel of meat in my mouth; for God hath determined how long I ſhall live, and therefore whether I eat or no, till then I ſhall not die. Again, God hath determined from all etetnity, touching every one of us, whether we ſhall be poor or rich in this world, and therefore to draw this concluſion, that it is no matter whether I be induſtrious in following my calling, and looking after my trade, or whether I ſpend my eſtate in rioting and drunkeneſſe; God hath determined

determined whether I ſhall be rich or poor; if he hath decreed I ſhall be poor, I ſhall be poor; or that I ſhall be rich, I ſhall be rich, let me live as I pleaſe: this reaſoning is very fond and fooliſh in Temporal things, therefore much more in Spiritual. God hath determined from all eternity thou ſhalt be ſaved or damned, and the decree of God cannot be changed; but now to draw hence, that it is no matter how I live, whether in waies of holineſs, or in waies of ſin, this is an abuſive collection from Gods decree. Becauſe as, Dr. *Preſton* ſaith, if a man doth not uſe thoſe means that may evidence to his ſoul that he is elected, it is an argument he is not elected. If thou ſay, if God hath determined it, he will ſave me, whether I am holy or profane, and therefore I will never hear Sermon, never pray in my family, never uſe holy duties; Saith *Preſton*, if thou neglect theſe means, it is an argument thou art not elected; becauſe, as God hath elected thee to the end, he hath alſo ordained thee to uſe the means. I have read a ſtory of an *Italian*, who lying upon his death-bed, ſent for a Phyſician, the moſt exquiſite and exact Artiſt in all *Italy*; and this man held this opinion I am now ſpeaking of, that ſeeing Gods decrees were unalterable, a man might live as he liſt, and yet be ſaved; that let a man be as holy as he could be, if God had decreed his damnation, he ſhould be damned; and let a man be never ſo wicked, if God have decreed his ſalvation he ſhould be ſaved; and that the decree of God took off the uſe of all means, that a man need not uſe any meanes, but onely truſt in God. The Phyſician being a man acquainted in the myſteries of Religion, after he had asked him the ſtate of his body, and where the diſeaſe lay, the party deſiring him to preſcribe ſome phyſick; the Phyſician gave him this anſwer: ſaith he, God hath determined how long you ſhall live, therefore, if I give you phyſick; if God hath determined you ſhall die, you ſhall die for all that; and if he hath decreed you ſhall live, though I give you no phyſick, yet you ſhall live. And this anſwer (ſaith the Hiſtorian) took ſuch place with the *Italian*, that it converted him in this very principle, and he became a man very diligent in following the means of grace, upon this very ſaying. And indeed, a

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uſt and grounded ſpeech it is. This therefore is my anſwer, that if ſuch reaſonings as theſe in temporal things are unreaſonable, they are much more in ſpiritual.

Secondly, to you that make this plea, I would ſay this: That at that very inſtant wherein God did decree or determine to bring a man to life, at that very inſtant God did decree that that man would be holy before he died; he ſhall uſe all holy and ſanctified means conducible to his ſalvation. *Rom.* 8. 29. *Whom he did predeſtinate, them he did predeſtinate to be conformable to the Image of his ſon.* God the Father, in that very decree wherein he doth ordain man to life, did ordain, that thoſe men elected ſhould live conformable to Jeſus Chriſt. *Epheſ.* 1. 4. *He hath choſen us in Chriſt, before the foundation of the world was laid, that we ſhould be holy and blameleſs before him in love.* God did decree, that our lives ſhould be holy; he ordaines holineſs as the means, as well as heaven as the end. So *Epheſ.* 2. 10. *God hath created us in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which he hath before ordained, that we ſhould walk in them,* 2 *Theſ.* 2. 13. God, before the world was, at that very inſtant wherein he ordained and choſe men to life, did alſo ordain, that men ſhould live a holy and blameleſs life here upon earth. Now then, for men to make this objection, that ſeeing God hath decreed men to life, therefore men may live as they liſt, is abſurd: for if men do live as they liſt, it is an argument God did not decree them to life, becauſe God in decreeing men to life and ſalvation, did decree they ſhould walk in a courſe of ſanctification, and holy living in this world.

Thirdly, ſuppoſe this ſhould be taken for granted, that God had decreed to damn thee or me; that God in his purpoſe had appointed he would not ſave us; yet God, as a Creator, deſerves thy ſervice. God, as a Creator, may lay claim to thy duties. Though God ſhould condemn us, yet he making us, deſerves obedience, and deſerves duties of thankfulneſs from us. And therefore, under this notion onely, though no other conſideration be looked after, this ſhould engage you to righteous living; and this ſhould engage you in a way of duties, though he never ſave you. *Adam*, though he never ſhould come

come to heaven, being in innocency, yet being made and created by God, was engaged to live a holy life. And so it is with every man alive, as we are creatures, and have a being from God, the comforts of this life from God, all this doth oblige us to a course of obe[illegible]ce, and righteous living toward God, though he should throw us into hell, when we have done. And thus much for resolving the fourth Quere, that the decree of God touching mens election to life, doth no way give encouragement to men to live as they list, upon the forementioned grounds. I now pass to the fifth Quere.

Fifthly, what temptations doth the devil suggest into the mindes of godly men, to make them doubt with themselves, that they are not elected by God, when indeed they are; to make them think they are *reprobate silver*, when they are *vessels of honour, meet for their Masters use?* Haply I may speak to some whose spirits are perplexed it this case. And the answer hereunto I shall reduce to three heads, and as I lay them down, labour to take them off, that they may be no just ground or reason to make you doubt of your election.

First, the devil tempts a godly man with this, that sure you cannot be elected, Because that before your calling you were so exceeding sinful and profane in your lives; so exceedingly profane, vile, wicked livers, that certainly (the devil will say) such as you could not fall within the compasse of Gods purpose to save.

Secondly, the devil will tell you, that certainly you cannot be elected to life, because that after your calling in to Jesus Christ, you have fallen so foulely into capital and scandalous crimes and sins.

And thirdly, because that God doth continually pursue his people with outward and great afflictions; thence the devil will gather, you are not the chosen and beloved of God. These three grand temptations he doth many times fasten upon tender consciences, meerly to create a world of doubts and perplexities in the chosen vessels of mercy. I begin with the first.

First, the devil tempts you, that sure you are not elected, because your lives were so exceedingly profane, and you were such abominable ill-livers, before you took upon you the profession

fession of Jesus Christ, this the devil laies before many a poor soul to stumble at.

To satisfie you in this therefore, I shall lay down four particulars by way of answer.

First many of the servants of God before their calling have been very lewd, wicked, notorious, profane livers, and yet have been within the compasse of Gods election to life and glory. Cast your eyes upon *Paul*, and there you shall finde what he was before his call. He tells you himselfe, *I was a blasphemer*, (a horrible sin) *I was a persecuter, I was injurious to Gods Church. I haled men to prison for professing the name of Iesus.* (These are great sins) Nay further, saith he, *I was exceeding mad against the Church of God*; A man enraged with malice against the people of God. Now what could be more vile then these? And yet you will finde this man a chosen vessel of mercy. Nay, you shall finde, God to strengthen the confidence of men upon their election, puts a scandalous liver and election together, to make men see, that a scandalous life before conversion is no prejudice to a mans election. *Acts* 9.13,14. *And Ananias said, Lord, we have heard of this man by many* (speaking of *Paul*) *how much evil he hath done to the Saints at Ierusalem.* We have heard by many what an evil man this is, *and that he hath authority from the chief Priests to binde all that call upon thy Name*, and that this man did do it, did execute his commission; here was a wicked liver: but now mark what the Lord saith, *Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel to me.* Here you see *Ananias* laies his offence and his wickednes before him; and yet *Go thy way*, saith God: *Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel to me.* The like instances we have in *Manasseh* and *Mary Magdalen.* This therefore is my first answer, that many of the servants of God have been men of very ill and notorious lives before conversion, and yet they have been within the compass of Gods election to salvation.

Secondly, though men have been notoriously wicked in their lives before calling, yet if this notorious wickednes doth lay any engagement upon them to make them labour to be more eminent in grace after calling; this is rather a signe of election then reprobation. It is observable in *Paul*, he was

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a notorious wicked man before his call; but now this exceeding wickedness of his before call his did engage him to abour to exceed all others in goodness after he was converted; and the more evil he was before, the more holy he labours to be after. As he laboured before to hale men to prison for professing Jesus Christ, he is now as zealous to draw men to Jesus Christ after his call; he was very industruous to do evil before his call, and this made him after his call, as he saith himselt, *I was in labours more abundant then they all.* And so *Mary Magdalen*, who before her calling was a vile woman, one that was a common harlot; a woman out of whom Jesus Christ cast seven devils, and yet this woman, after her calling, she laboured to be more eminent in godly sorrow, then any woman before or since; *she washed Christs feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.* The like of which you do not read of any woman in Scripture. And this was a very good sign; when your notoriousness in waies of sin before calling shall lay such an engagement upon you to become more eminent in grace after calling; this is a very good encouragement or evidence that you are within the compass of Gods election; and therefore you have no cause to be discouraged. Suppose before the word laid hold upon your conscience, you were guilty of filthy sins, not fit to be named in the congregation; if you will the more honour God, and praise God now, and walk more humbly, and labour to excel each other in grace now, as you did in sinne in times past; This is a great sin that you are in the compass of Gods Elect ones.

Thirdly, you that have been scandalous in your lives before calling, for your comfort know, that God in his eternal counsel doth commonly make the profane and wicked and the worst of men, the objects of his election, rather then civil honest men, rather then men that are of an honest and civil and moral conversation here in this world. And the Lord doth it upon this ground, the more to magnifie the freeness, and the riches of his own grace in electing men to life. For should God onely choose moderate and civill honest men in the world, men would be apt to think it is that mans morality,

and that mans civility, that was the motive which provoked God to elect them; and therefore God, to overthrow these thoughts, he lets election run rather to men that have been notoriously grosse and sinful in their lives, then other men; *Manasseh* a notorious bloody man, yet falls within the compass of Gods election, when many a civil man is left out. *Mary* a common harlot, yet chosen, when many a modest chaste woman was cast into hell, *Matth.*21. 31, 32. There Christ urgeth a parable of two men; *One that said he would go and follow Christ, but did not; and the other said he would not go, but did; now which of these twain did the will of Christ? and they said, he first. And Iesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that publicans and harlots shall go into heaven before you.* But you will say, was this common? this was only one single time: therefore mark the next words, *For Iohn came to you in the way of righteousnes, and you believed not; but the publicans and harlots believed in Christ. Iohn* came preaching, and you would not believe, you *Pharisees*, strict moral men, that did not fly out into such scandals as other men did, you would not believe, saith Christ; but *Publicans*, men that were most addicted to extortion, and unconscionable gain, *they embraced Iesus Christ*, when moral men would not. This therefore should be another comfort for you, that many times election runns rather to the profaner sort of men, then to men that are civil and righteous dealing men here in the world; and this God doth to magnifie the riches of his own grace.

Fourthly, that it is no matter what you were before your calling, if you are a repentant and holy people after; your former miscarriages shall no way prejudice your future blessednes. 1 *Cor.*6.9,10,11. *Neither Fornicator, nor Idolater, nor Adulterer, no envious, nor thiefe, nor covetous, nor reviler, shal enter into the Kingdome of Heaven: and such were some of you, &c.* Here you see a Catalogue of vile evils heaped together, *and such were some of you; but now you are washed, now you are sanctified, &c.* So that no matter what you were before conversion, though guilty of great sins, so you are now a reformed people, now a sanctified people, *Titus* 3.3. *We our selves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures,*

sures and living in malice and envy, &c. You were so, *but after the kindness and love of God appeared to you*, after they were converted they were not so. So that these four particulars will clearly take off this objection, that no matter what you were before conversion, if you are now a repentant people, and bewail your evils, and reform your waies, your former ill led life will be no hindrance at all to your election. Indeed this I must needs say, that you that have been most notorious in sin, God expects this at your hands, that you be most eminent in grace, most deep in humiliation, most eminent in godly sorrow, though your former evils do no way prejudice your election.

Secondly, if the devil cannot fasten this upon you, he will come upon you with this assault, *viz.* your frequent falling into scandalous and foul and gross enormities, after you took upon you a profession of Jesus Christ. And this the Devil will lay close: haply sin before conversion was not so great; but now since you have followed Sermons, and since you have professed Jesus Christ, since that time you have fallen foulely into gross and scandalous sins, and surely this is inconsistent with grace, and cannot befal persons within the compass of Gods election.

And I confess this is both sad and hazardous: yet I shall lay down three things to uphold thee, that yet for all this thou maiest be within the compass of Gods election. As,

First, that divers persons that were within the compass of Gods election, have fallen foulely into gross sins after their call. *Lot*, after he was called, fell to be incestuous, and fell to drunkenness; *David*, after he was called, fell into Adultery; *Peter*, after he was called, fell to a denial of Jesus Christ. Yea, you read of *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 11.9. *That his heart was turned from the Lord, after the Lord had revealed himself unto him twice:* After God had revealed himself to *Solomon*, and converted him, after that time he did evil against his God. Nay, you read further, *Nehem.* 13.26, 27. That *Solomons wives turned away his heart from the Lord, though he was the beloved of his God.* Though he were beloved by God, and were elected by him, yet his wives turned away his heart from the Lord. The like phrase you have *Numb.* 14.23. *After all these works, I have done amongst them;*

them, and the miracles I have ſhewn them in Egypt, and in the Wilderneſs, they have provoked me, ſaith the Lord, theſe ten times. After they were the Lords by covenant, and after they were a delivered people; after this they provoked him many a time, by ſinning againſt him, and yet divers of them were elect veſſels of mercy. So that, I ſay, many of Gods ſervants after their calling, have fallen foully into ſcandalous ſins, and yet have been within the compaſs of Gods election.

Secondly, if your falling into groſs and ſcandalous ſins, have not theſe four ſinful ingredients, your falling into ſinne after calling may be conſiſtent with election. Firſt, if you fall not into ſin voluntarily. Secondly, if you fall not into the ſame ſin frequently. Thirdly, if you fall not into ſin with complacency. And fourthly, if you lie not under your fall impenitently. If theſe ingredients be mixed with your ſinning after your call, they are inconſiſtent with election. Firſt, if you fall into ſin voluntarily, *that you ruſh into ſin, as a horſe into the battel.* Secondly, if you fall into the ſame ſin frequently, then it is hazardous and dangerous. It is true, *Peter* denied Chriſt, but it was but in one fit of a temptation; *David* fell into Adultery, but it was never but once; *Lot* was guilty of drunkenneſs, but onely in one fit: For the Servants of God, though they fall, yet they fall not frequently into the ſame ſin, if groſs and ſcandalous. Thirdly, if you fall into ſin with complacency, that you take pleaſure in the evils you fall into; if you do, as *Iob* ſaith, *wallow ſin under your tongue,* counting it ſweet and delightſome to you. And laſtly, if all this be joyned with impenitency, that you have not a heart to repent of the evils you fall into, the Lord have mercy upon you; for certainly if you fall into ſin with theſe ingredients, you are not within the compaſs of Gods mercy to ſave. But now, though you do fall into ſin, if it be not voluntary, but through the force of temptation; if it be not with complacency, but a diſlike of the ſins you fall into; and as ſoon as you do fall, and ſee your ſins, you repent and riſe again; though you do fall in this way, it will be no prejudice to your election.

Thirdly, falling into ſin after calling and profeſſion made of Jeſus Chriſt, may be conſiſtent with Election in theſe four caſes.

caſes. Firſt, if the ſins you fall into be clearly diſcerned. Secondly, if they are ſenſibly bewailed. Thirdly, if they are ſtrongly reſiſted. And laſtly, if they be dayly laboured, and prayed againſt. Though you doe fall into ſinne, yet in theſe caſes ſinne will not be damning to you, or be an impediment to your election. And thus I have done with the ſecond caſe of conſcience. Only let me urge this one thing before I leave it, (for I would not have you make this Doctrine a Doctrine of liberty; but I would have you lay this to heart) that if any of you fall foully after converſion, believe it, God will make you ſmart for this, though not in hell, yet you ſhall have a hell in your conſcience, you ſhall have the very preguſtations of hell, a wounded conſcience, and God will expect deep humiliation, and great repentance, if you ſinne after profeſſion made of Jeſus Chriſt. It may have that influence upon you, as upon *David*, who cried out, *I have no quietneſs in my bones by reaſon of my ſin.* God will give you no reſt night nor day by reaſon of ſin, if you run into it after profeſſion made of Jeſus Chriſt.

Thirdly, men do doubt of their election, becauſe God purſues them with continual afflictions, and layes the continued ſtrokes of his heavy wrath upon them; and this makes many a godly man think that he is not in the number of Gods elect ones. To which I ſhall briefly anſwer.

That this is nothing elſe but a temptation, and not a truth; and it was the very controverſie that *Iobs* friends had with him; they would faſten this upon *Iob*, that he was a Reprobate, and an Hypocrite, becauſe God did ſo afflict him: yet *Iob* maintained his ſincerity, and ſhews his grounds that God was his friend, and that he did not reject him, though he did afflict him. But to ſpeak more particularly.

Firſt, no man can infallibly and certainly judge of Gods purpoſes about mens election or reprobation, by any of the diſpenſations of God toward their bodies in the things of this life. *Eccl.* 9. 1, 2. *No man knows either love or hatred by any thing that is before him. All things fall alike to all. The ſame event to him that feareth God, and to him that feareth him not, to him that ſweareth, and to him that feareth an oath.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Afflictions from God are ſo far from being grounds, or evidences that a man is not elected, that in ſome caſes they may prove evidences that they are the very elect of God. *Heb.* 12.6,7. *He chaſteneth every ſon whom he receiveth, they are baſtards, and not ſones, whom he chaſtiſeth not. As many as I love, I rebuked and chaſten, be zealous therefore and repent.* Rev. 3. 19. In ſome caſes afflictions from God are rather tokens of love from God, then the contrary. As now, in caſe afflictions be as a ſpur to you, to make you quicken your pace in heaven-way. 2. In caſe your afflictions be as pruning-hooks to you, to cut and lop off the luxuriant buddings, and workings of ſin in the heart. 3. In caſe affliction be as a hedge to you to keep you in, and to make you walk in a cloſe communion with God, and not to wander or go aſtray from him: 4. In caſe affliction be as a file to you, to file off that ruſt that cleaves to your nature. 5. In caſe affliction proves a furnace to refine you from that droſs of corruption that is mixt with your ſervices: in theſe caſes afflictions are ſo far from being grounds to doubt of your Election, that they may rather give you evidence, you are the very elect of God.

Thirdly, That God in his wiſdome doth many times expoſe his own people to greater troubles in this life, then he lets wicked and reprobate men undergo. God will not give reprobates their hell here, that ſo he might give them hell hereafter. God wil not give the elect heaven here, to make heaven more deſierable to them while they live here, and more welcome when they come there. It is Gods pleaſure in the diſpenſations of his providence amongſt men, to let his own people lie under more outward ſorrows then wicked men ſhal do, *Pſal.* 73.5. *Their eyes burſt out with fatneſs, they are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued as other men are.* The Lord in his diſpenſations doth ſo deal with wicked men, that they are not plagued, they are not troubled as godly men are in this world. And therefore ſurely affliction is no argumemt of Gods diſpleaſure, or of their not being within the compaſs of Gods purpoſe to do them good.

SERM.

SERMON XVI.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.

THE Doctrine I am yet upon is this, *That Christians ought to put forth a great deal of diligence to make this sure to their soules, that they are eternally called by God to life and salvation.* In the prosecution of which Doctrine, I have gone over several particulars, and have now onely one Querie more to satisfie about Election, and then to winde up this Doctrine, in laying downe some explicatory propositions, very conducible to illustrate this Doctrine of Election. And the Querie to be resolved is this.

What are those delusions of the Devil whereby he nourisheth presumptuous perswasions in the minds of men, that they are elected by God, when they are not? And to answer this, I shall reduce all I have to say under these three heads.

First, the Devil perswades wicked men that they are elected upon this ground, Because they do not break forth into such grosse and scandalous enormities in their lives, as many men that live about them do: and therefore the Devil boulsters them up in this, Surely if you were not elected, you would be as bad as any, and as vile and exorbitant as any. Now seeing God keeps you in, and you act not such things in your lives as other men doe; this may be a comfortable evidence to you, that you are in the number of Gods elect ones. And this delusion deceives thousands of people, especially moralized and civilized men; they run hoodwinckt to hell, nourishing hopes of life and salvation, and

e ver feel the contrary, till they come to death and hell. I shall declare this to be a delusion, in laying down four or five particulars. As

First, That there are many men that are mentioned in Scripture not to have been within the compass of Gods election, who yet were men of very blamelesse and honest lives, not blemished with any gross and scandalous evils. Read *Luke* 18.11,14. of the Pharisee; He tels you, *he thanks God he was no extortioner, no adulterer, no covetous person, no drunkard, nor was he as wicked as the Publican was.* Here you see a man that spake vauntingly and truly, that he was not a man that broke out into those miscarriages other men did; yet what was this man? An elect vessel? No. Read ver. 14. and the Text tels you, *the Publican went away justified rather then the other*; The Pharisee, though he was free from scandalous and gross enormities in his life, yet he was not a justified man, and so by consequence not an elect man. You read of hypocrites, *Matth.* 23. *that cleansed the outside of the cup and of the platter*, that is, cleansed their conversations, and cleansed the outward man of gross scandals, *and yet within were ful of filth*; and Christ tels us, they were *hypocrites*, that *should have their portion in hell.* And should you view over Historians that write of the Scribes and Pharisees, and strict men among the Jewes, they will tell you what wonderful holy-lived men they were; they were often in duties, fasted twice a week, prayed every day in the corners of the streets, none so strict as they in observing the Sabbath; would go vailed, lest they should be ensnared by lascivious objects; and yet these very men so wonderful strict and cautious, were men that had no dram of grace in them at all. Though they were a people thus well dressed in their lives, yet the Scripture tels us of them, that Whores and Harlots should go to Heaven before them. This therefore is the first, that many men have had their lives free from gross scandals, and yet were men that were not elected by God to life and salvation.

Secondly, That a mans conversation may be free from scandalous sinnes, yet if this freedome from scandals proceed from a wrong principle, it may be in a person not elected. As I will make

make it appear. There may be a freedome from groſs ſins proceeding from a threefold principle, and yet a man be in a ſtate of damnation and of reprobation. As firſt, There may be a freedome from ſcandals, proceeding from religious education; ſecondly, from a natural diſpoſition; and thirdly, from the power of reſtraining grace. Firſt, there may be a freedome from groſs ſinnes, proceeding from the power of education. So the young man in the Goſpel, *Matth.* 19. 18, 19, 20. when Chriſt told him what the Law was; *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery, thou ſhalt not ſteal, thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf, thou ſhalt do no murder, thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs, &c.* Saith the young man, *All theſe have I kept from my youth.* He was a Phariſee, and his parents ſtrict in their courſe of living, and brought him up ſo from his youth; and yet this man no elect man, *ver.* 22. Secondly, a man may be free from ſcandalous ſins, ariſing from an ingenious natural diſpoſition. A mans diſpoſition may ſometimes be utterly averſe to ſome ſinnes. *Plutarch* a heathen could ſay this, I had rather it were ſaid, there were no ſuch man as *Plutarch* in the world, then to ſay that *Plutarch* was unchaſt, *Plutarch* was a drunkard, or *Plutarch* was a ſwearer. Mans natural temper may ſometimes be free from groſs ſinnes, and yet he not an elect perſon for all this. And then thirdly, a man may be free from groſs ſinnes, as proceeding from the power of reſtraining grace, *Gen.* 20. 6. *I alſo withheld Abimelech from ſinning againſt me.* He was a Heathen, and a wicked man, and yet God by the power of reſtraining grace, did keep *Abimelech* from running into that exorbitant courſe of ſinning againſt him. So that if a man be free from groſs ſinnes, and yet proceeding from falſe principles, a man may not be an elect man for all this. Unleſs your freedome from ſinne proceed from a renewed nature, from a ſanctified heart, and from the ſaving operation of the holy Ghoſt; unleſs it comes from theſe principles, your freedome from groſs ſinnes can be no pledge to your ſoules, that you are elected by God to life.

Thirdly, that a man having a good life, free from ſcandalous ſinnes, if he have not a good heart, that is no argument

of a man that is within the compass of Gods election, *Rom.* 2. 28, 29. *He is not a Iew, which is one outwardly; nor is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Iew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart, whose praise is not of men but of God.* Intimating, that he is not a Christian; he is not an elect Jew, that was one outwardly, that is, that was conformable to the rites and customes of the Jewes; but he was one that was one inwardly, that had his sins mortified, his nature changed, and his heart cleansed, he was an elect Jew. So that to have a holy life, if a man have not an holy heart, is no sign that a man is within the compass of Gods election.

Fourthly, God in electing men to life, doth pass by moral and civil honest men, that trust and depend upon their own righteousnes and strict living, rather then any sort of men in the world. *Matth.* 21. 31, 33. saith Christ, *Iohn Baptist preached the Gospel of repentance, but you believed not, but Publicans and harlots believed.* Those Pharisees that did depend upon their own righteousnes, and their own goodnes, Christ did not call them, Christ did not owne them, God made them not the objects of his election. Hence it is said, *Math.* 9. 13. *Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance:* that is, men depending upon their own righteousnes, and their own parts, they are left out by Christ, as if he came not for them; but Christ came to call sinners, that see their sin, and were vile in their own eyes, Christ came to call such. Again,

2 The second delusion, whereby the devil makes men think they are elected by God, is drawn from their external vocation; that they are not onely civilized and moralized ones, but they find the power of the word to call them; and upon this vocation they bottome the hopes of their election. And they have Scripture for it, *Rom.* 8. 30. *Whom God predestinates he calls.* Now God hath called them by the word, and they have found the word come with power upon their conscience, to reform the evils of their life. (And the power of vocation they deem higher (as indeed it is) then the power of education, or natural temper;) and therefore, think they, I having

having vocation, this is an evidence to me of my election. To this deluſion I ſhall onely ſay two things by way of anſwer.

Firſt, it is true indeed, the Scripture ſaith, all whom God predeſtinates, he calls; but the Scripture doth not ſay, that all whom he calls, he predeſtinates. No man that God appoints to life, but before he dies, God will call him by the word; but God doth not ſay any where, that thoſe whom he calls, them he did predeſtinate to life.

Secondly, many men are outwardly called by the word into a profeſſion of Chriſt, when they are not eternally elected by God to ſalvation. *Matth.* 22. 14. *Many are called, but few are choſen.* Many are called, but all thoſe that are externally called by the word, are not choſen, nor all ordained to life. A man may be called from ignorance to knowledge, yet not elected *Heb.* 6. 4. *After they were enlightned, and had taſted the word of God, and the power of the world to come, yet they fell away.* A man may be called from profaneneſs to profeſſion, from the world into the Church, as *Simon Magus* was, yet not elected, but remain *in the gall of bitterneſs and bond of iniquity.*

Thirdly, A third deluſion whereby men are deceived by the Devil, to think they are elected when they are not, is this; If they cannot plead their education, and moral manner of living, or if they cannot plead their vocation, their laſt plea is, the mercy of God, they hope God is a merciful God, and God made them not all to damn them; they are Gods creatures, made by him, and God that made them will ſave them; and hereupon they faſten their hopes, that they are in the number of Gods elect ones. This is a ſtrong deluſion, eſpecially amongſt ignorant people. And to this I anſwer in two particulars.

Firſt, when as men ſay, God is a merciful God, therefore they hope they are elected: I anſwer; It is true, God is a merciful God, yet God is as juſt as merciful; he is mercifully juſt, and juſtly merciful; his mercy cannot intrench upon his Juſtice; nor ſhall his Juſtice intrench upon his mercy; one Attribute ſhall not claſh with another; he is no more merciful then he is juſt, nor is he more juſt then he is merciful.

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Secondly, though God be a merciful God, yet Gods saving mercy is not so large as to extend to all creatures that live, that he hath made. You read *Isai.* 27. 11. *This is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy upon them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.* Here you see the Prophet tells them, that that God that made them, will damn them, and that God that formed them, that God will shew them no favour. So that Gods mercy extends not so far, as to reach to all the works of his hands; for if so, the Devils might claim salvation as well as man, for God made them when they were glorious Angels, as well as man: and therefore, if all the works of Gods hands should plead for salvation, they might as well come within the compass of Gods election as wicked men do.

And thus you see in these several Sermons, I have finished the Doctrines of Effectual Vocation, and Eternal Election. I will now a little illustrate the point, by laying down ten Propositions, which will serve to clear the Doctrine of Election in many points about it, and so conclude.

First, That all men are not the objects of Gods election, or of Gods choice. And this proposition doth confute the opinion of *Origen*. *Origen* was of this mind, that all mankind should be saved, nay, the very devils themselves, they should all be saved by Christ. A most groundless and unheard of opinion; for all men are not elected to salvation. *Jude* tels us in his Epistle, there were some of old ordained to condemnation; and if so, surely they could not fall within the compass of Gods election, 1 *Thes.* 5. 9. There are some *ordained to wrath*; but we are not amongst them, saith the Apostle, *but we are ordained to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ.* All are not objects of Gods election to life.

Secondly, that the fewest sort of men and women that God hath made are the objects of his election. God in his own counsel hath elected to life and salvation the fewest sort of men and women in the world. And this is a very dreadful point. *Many are called, but few are chosen.* Matth. 22. 14. Rom. 11. 5. *A remnant, according to the election of grace.* And herein pursuing this head, I shall lay down two things under this pro-

proposition. First, that there are but few rich men chosen by God to life and salvation. Secondly, there are but few civil honest men chosen by God to life and salvation. There are but few rich men that fall within the compasse of Gods purpose to save, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. *Not many mighty*, (he doth not say, not any; but *not many mighty*,) *not many noble, not many great ones of the world are chosen.* You read *Matth.* 19. 24. *That it is as easie for a Camel to go through a needles eye, as for a rich man to enter into the Kingdome of God. As easie for a Camel.* It is not meant in this sense, as some expound it; That there was a gate in *Hierusalem* called the Needles eye; a little and low gate, which their Camels being laden could not go through, and therefore they must unload the burden, and the Camels stoop before they could enter. Some think Christs speech had relation to that *Beza* saith, that instead of καμηλον a Camels they read καμιλον a Cable, which, if untwisted may be put through the eye of a Needle; but the knot is not untied, but cut by this Exposition. But the words were a proverbial speech among the Jewes, who had this proverb amongst them, that when any one spake things either unlikely or unprobable, they would say, This can be as easily done as a Camel can goe through a needles eye. And Christ, alluding to this Proverb, saith, that rich men that dote upon their riches, and cleave to their wealth, and rather part with heaven and Christ, and soule and all, then part with their riches, Christ makes it an impossible thing for such rich men to come into heaven. As I once told what *Buchanan* said, lying upon his death-bed, in a message to King *Iames*; I am going to that place where few Kings come. And Beloved, the speech is true, for *not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble hath the Lord chosen.* Secondly, few civil honest men do fall within the compass of Gods choice to save. Moral men, that trust upon their civility and moral honesty, and plain dealing, few or none of these come to heaven. *Publicans and Harlots shall come to Heaven before you.* Mat. 21. 32. Whores and Harlots believe in me, when you do not, saith Christ.

Thirdly, That though God in his own counsel hath determined, or made choice but of the fewest number of men & women

men to life and salvation, yet this doth no way intrench upon the mercy of God, this doth no way lessen or impeach the mercy of God. Men may think, as if surely God had cast off all bowels, and cast off all mercy. What? God make such a world of men as he hath done, and save but a few of these? a man might think, as if God were a hard Master, that delighted in the destruction of men, that had forgotten to be gracious; such a hard charge will they be apt to lay upon God. But now, Beloved, that God hath elected so few a number to life, this doth no way impeach the mercy of God. And this I make appear thus: because God was bound to save none at all; therefore you cannot challenge God either with unmercifulness, or unfaithfulness, if he should save none: It was a meer act of his bounty and good will, that he would save any. Nay, secondly, there is that in man, in the best of men, that might justly provoke God not to save any: And therefore, if God save any it is of grace. And this is a certain rule, that God doth shew more mercy in saving of one, then he would have done rigour of Justice, had he damned all. As may be made plain by this comparison; Suppose forty men guilty of Rebellion were arraigned for their lives, and were condemned to die by the Law; if the Prince pardon four of these fourty, he shews more mercy in pardoning the four, then he doth rigour of Justice in condemning the forty. Why? because the fact deserved death in all alike. So it is with God: Every man upon earth deserves death and damnation; and if God cull out any of the mass of mankind, to save them, he shewes more mercy, then he had done rigorous Justice, should he have destroyed all, because he is bound to save none at all.

Fourthly, God in electing a certain number to life, doth it without forefight of any good works which he saw would be in them. Indeed the *Papists* and *Arminians* joyne their strength to maintain this, God, say they, foresaw men would believe in Christ, and would be holy in their lives, and therefore God did chuse them to life. This you may remember I spent some time in overthrowing formerly, and therefore pass it over now, *viz.* That God did not chuse men to life, with reference to

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any good works he foreſaw in them. This indeed is an undoubted truth; All men whom God did elect to life, he foreſaw they would have good works in them; but Gods foreſeeing of this, was not the cauſe for which he did elect them. No, the motive was his own will, according to the pleaſure of his own grace, *Rom.* 9. 11. and *Rom.* 11. 5. *A remnant are ſaved according to the election of grace, for if it were of works, grace is no more grace.* Were election upon foreſight of good works, then it would follow, that infants dying in infancy were not within the compaſs of Gods election, becauſe an infant ſo dying could not performe any good works; and ſo their caſe would be moſt miſerable. Beſides, we are not juſtified by actual works, therefore not elected upon works foreſeen, *Rom.* 3. 24. for there is the like reaſon of theſe two.

Fifthly, That Gods election is ſo free, that in chuſing and electing men to life and ſalvation, he doth not do it for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf. Underſtand this well, that therein you might both give Chriſt his due, and God the Father his due: for miſtake me not; God doth ſave none but by Chriſt, but God did elect men without reference to Jeſus Chriſt as the motive of election, meerly according to the purpoſe of his own will. All modern and later Divines lay down this for a truth, that it was the meer pleaſure and good will of God to man, that was the motive of Gods electing us, and not Chriſt. Chriſt could not be the cauſe, becauſe he was the effect. Now what is the effect cannot be the cauſe. Gods love in electing mankind, did produce Jeſus Chriſt to be the means of our ſalvation, and of bringing about Gods election, therefore he being the effect of election cannot be the cauſe. The cauſe of election was eternal, but the merits of Chriſt were not ſo. Again, Chriſt was elected himſelf. 1 *Pet.* 1. 20. *He was preordained of God before the world was.* Now he that was elected himſelf, could not be the cauſe of our election. Beſides, the elect are ſaid to be given to Chriſt to be ſaved, *John* 17. 2. therefore he was not the cauſe of our election. It is true, the Scripture tells us, *Eph.* 1. 4. *We are elected in Chriſt*, i. we are elected in Chriſt as a common perſon. God firſt choſe Chriſt, and then believers in Chriſt, as members of his body.

But God elects no man for Christs sake, but man is chosen meerly of Gods bounty, without reference to Jesus Christ. And here Divines say, Gods love in electing man to life was as free as if Christ had never died; and it was so free, that man was not beholding to Christ for his election; and yet Christs sufferings were so full, as if men were not bound to God for their election. Thus they are pleased to expresse it. And the reason why the Scripture speaks thus, that we are onely chosen in Christ, not for Christ, is to give God the Father his due in electing men to life: that God did it meerly of his own grace, and therein Gods love and favour is apparent to all the world, that he did elect man without Christ, as the motive of his election: and yet Jesus Christ being come into the world, he carries on our salvation, and he is the cause of it; though he was not the cause of Gods first thoughts, in electing man to life.

Sixthly, All men that are elected by God to life and salvation shall sooner or later before they die be called into a state of conversion and believing, *Rom.* 8.30. *whom he had predestinate, them he also called*: and *Acts* 13.48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.* So that God the Father, in ordaining man to life, hath ordained this also, that before they die, they shall be converted and believing people, and therefore men remaining unconverted, uncalled, unbelieving, they are not the objects of Gods election.

Seventhly, that God in chusing or electing men to life, doth let his election run ordinarily unto the meanest, and unto the worst sort of men in the world, men that have least natural endowments, least moral excellencies, least worldly gallantry; ordinarily election runs that way. *God hath chosen the poor things of this world, and things despised, and things that are not hath he chosen.* 1 Cor. 1.27. Jam. 2.5. *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith?* Ordinarily the Lord chuseth poor and mean men, that have no natural or moral excellencies. Hence it was that when Christ left the learned Pharisees, and Doctors among the Jews, the ignorant and poor people, they flocked after Jesus Christ; they looked after Jesus Christ, when the rich and great men of the world had no share in him.

Eighthly,

Eightly, that a man may be an elect child of God, and yet not expreſſe the fruit of his election in many years here in the world; and this is a very comfortable point. An inſtance you have of this in *Paul*. It is obſervable of *Paul*, the Scripture tells us *he was a choſen veſſel*, *Act*. 9. 15. and yet *Paul* lived many years, before the fruit of his election appeared in him. Some Hiſtorians ſay, *Paul* lived 37. the leaſt ſay 30 years before the fruit of election appeared in him, for he was converted the very year after Chriſts death; and all the while before, he did expreſs fruit that was ſeemingly repugnant to an elect eſtate, as if a man could not be an elect veſſel, that was ſo vile as he: *he was a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, injurious to the Church, haled men to priſon, mad with rage againſt the Profeſſors of Ieſus Chriſt*. Nay, he was a man that had an hand in putting *Steven* the firſt Martyr to death. So long he lived in a courſe of iniquity, for 30 years together, and yet this man was an elect veſſel then. So the Thief upon the Croſſe, an elect child of God, yet did not expreſſe the fruit of his election in repentance and converſion, until the laſt hour of his life. So that I ſay a man may be an elect child of God, and yet not expreſſe the fruit of his election in his life for many years.

Ninthly, that God for the great love he bears to his elect that are in the world, lets Reprobates and wicked men enjoy many mercies and outward deliverances for their ſakes, *Mark* 13. 19, 20. *There ſhall be tribulation*, ſaith Chriſt, *ſuch as was not from the beginning of the world, nor ſhall be to the end thereof: but for the elect ſake thoſe dayes ſhall be ſhortned*. For his elect ſake, God did mitigate, did ſhorten, God did take away that trouble from them. So *Eſa*. 1. 9. *Had not God left us a ſmall remnant, we had been like Sodome, yea like unto Gomorah*. Had not God left a handful of his elect and godly men amongſt them, all the reſt had been deſtroyed. So *Eſa*. 65. 8. *And the Lord ſaid, deſtroy not the people, for a bleſſing is among them*. That is, my people is among them, and my elect is among them, therefore deſtroy them not. God did not deſtroy the Nation of the Jewes, becauſe God had his own people mixed among them. So *Iob* 22. 30. And this concluſion adminiſters matter of thankfulneſs to all men upon earth, to make you bleſſe God,

that he keeps his people alive among you, for it is for the elects ſake you have all the outward bleſſings and mercies you do enjoy.

Tenthly and laſtly, take in this concluſion: that this world ſhall continue no longer then till the number of Gods elect be accompliſhed; when God hath accompliſhed, and brought in to Chriſt the number of his elect; the world ſhall not ſtand one minute longer after this work is done. God doth but uphold the world till the full number of *Iews* and *Gentiles* be come in. If the number were filled, *Ieſus Chriſt would ſurrender up the Kingdome to his Father.* The Heavens ſhould gather together like a ſcrowle, and the Elements ſhould melt with fervent heat, and this world ſhould come to a diſſolution. It is the elect in the world that keep up the world, that it doth not fall about our ears. And thus having ſpent theſe ſixteen Sermons touching mans effectual calling, and eternal Election, I have now brought all unto a concluſion. And I earneſtly intreat you, let it be your work, *to put forth your diligence to make this ſure to your own ſoules that you are effectually called, and that you are eternally elected to obtain life and ſalvation by Ieſus Chriſt.*

FINIS.

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